GOSPEL-LOVE
HEART-PURI
And the
FLOURISHIN
Of the
Righteous

BEING
The last SERMO
of the late Reverend
Mr. Joseph Car

London, Printed and are to be sold by
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over-against the Royal Exchange

The Flourishing of the Righteous

THE EPISTLE TO THE READER.

Christian Reader,

THese Sermons were preached by the Reverend Author of them a little while before his Entrance into ſt. I cannot learn that the occaons of them were extraordinary,

or that he had any design in them be-
yond that which accompanied the or-
dinary course of his Ministry; much
less a purpose to publish them, a
conceiving them either more useful,
or more needful, or more laboured
than the rest of his constant and
frequent Exercises in the same
kind. Neither did he leave any
such Copy of them as might be
helpful towards such an end. But
they were taken from his mouth by
the diligence of a Dexterous Hand,
who at first designed nothing but
his own use and edification by them;
untill observing how soon after the
preaching of them, God was pleased
to call him off from his Painful
Labour in his Vineyard, and so to
cut short all expectations of farther
administrations of Truth and Grace
by the Trust and Dispensation com-
mitted unto him; he resolved to
make them publick, for the good and
benefits of others. And as here-

he followed his own Inclination and Judgement; So if any thing be found in these Discourses as to Phrase of Speech, or manner of Expression, not answering that Accuracy, which this Author was known to have used in all his Writings published by himself; he alone must bear the blame of it, from them who think such defects blame worthy. These things I could not but acquaint the Reader withal, that he may look for no more in these Sermons, but what he might have found in the Constant Ministry of the Reverend Author. But yet I must say, upon their perusal, that take them under the Circumstances mentioned, they give no ill or disadvantageous Account of the Ordinary Labours and Endeavours of this Eminent Minister of the Gospel. Thus did Mr. Caryl use to preach, sometimes twice, sometimes thrice in the Week, alwayes shewing himself a

Workman that needed not to be ashamed. And if I mistake not, whoever shall consider these Sermons with Sobriety, Candour and Judgement, as part of his Constant Labours, will readily acknowledge, what rich and excellent Talents he was entrusted with, and how the great Reputation which his Ministry had for so many years in the Church of God, was no way undeserved. For my Accession to this Work in a Prefatory Discourse, it arose meerly from the importunity of the Publisher and Bookseller, as they both well know, and will acknowledge; wherein I see nothing my self of use or advantage, but only that I may tender satisfaction to the Reader, that he is not Imposed upon by any Spurious Offspring fathered on so great and worthy a Name. Somewhat also I was inclined unto a Compliance with their desires, that I might make use of this Advantage a little,

dirty Rode, wherein there is not any thing of Christian Sobriety, or common Ingenuity from first to last to be found. Yet what Violences have been offered unto the Sacred Truths of the Gospel in Important Articles of Faith, and other things scandalous to Christian Religion, will in another way be called to an Account, as some of them have been already; whereunto a Return may be expected of raging and bestial Calumnies, and no other. Here I shall not farther Indispose the Reader unto the serious perusal and Improvement of the ensuing Spiritual Discourses, wherein there is more Worth and Use, more that will turn unto a Refreshing Account at the last day, than in a thousand Clamorous Contests managed with Pride and Passion, what ever pretences they may be gilded withal.

That he who ministred this seed to the Sower, would multiply the seed

ſeed ſown, and give it an Encreaſe in the fruits of Rightcouſneſs among them that through his Providence ſhall be made partakers of it, is the Prayer of

Thy Servant in the Work
of the Goſpel,

John Owen.

Books

Books Printed, and are to be ſold by *John Hancok, Senior* and *Junior*, at the firſt Shop in *Pope's-Head-Alley*, at the Three Bibles; Who ſells all ſorts of Divinity-Books, *&c.* to Chapmen, or others.

Twelve Books lately publiſhed by Mr. Thomas Brooks, *late Preacher of the Goſpel at* Margarets New-Fiſh-ſtreet.

1. *Precious Remedies* againſt Satans devices; *Or*, Salve for Believers and Unbelievers ſores; being a companion for thoſe that are in Chriſt, or out of Chriſt, that ſlight or neglect Ordinances, under a pretence of living above them; that are growing in Spirituals, or decaying; that are tempted, or deſerted; afflicted, or oppoſed; that have aſſurance, or want it; on 2 *Cor.* 2. 11.

2. *Heaven*

2. *Heaven on Earth*; Or, a serious Discourse touching a well-grounded Assurance of mans everlasting happiness and blessedness, *&c.*

3. *The Unsearchable Riches of Christ*: Or Meat for strong Men, and Milk for Babes, held forth in two and twenty Sermons, from *Ephes.* 3. 8. Preached on his Lecture-nights at *Fish-street-hill.*

4. *His Apples of Gold for young Men and Women*; *&c.*

With the Young Mans Objections answered, and the Old Mans Doubts resolved.

5. *A String of Pearls*: Or, The best things reserved till last; delivered in a Sermon preached in *London*, *June* 8. 1657. at the Funeral of that Triumphant Saint Mrs. *Mary Blake*, late Wife to his worthy Friend Mr. *Nicholas Blake*, Merchant.

6. *The Mute Christian*; *with Soveraign Antidotes against the most miserable Exigents*: Or, a Christian with an Olive-leaf in his mouth, when he is under the greatest afflictions, the sharpest and sorest tryals and troubles, the saddest and darkest Providences and Changes.

7. *An Ark for all Gods* Noahs *in a stormy day.* Wherein is shewed the transcendent

ſcendent excellency of a Believers portion; on *Lam.* 3. 24.

8. *The Crown and Glory of Chriſtianity*: Or, Holineſs the only way to happineſs diſcovered in 48 Sermons on *Heb.* 12. 14.

9. *The Privy Key of Heaven*; Or, a Diſcourſe of Cloſet-Prayer, twenty Arguments for it, with the Reſolution of ſeveral conſiderable Queſtions, *&c.*

10. *A Heavenly Cordial for all that have had, or have eſcaped the Plague*, &c.

11. There is now publiſhed an excellent new Book of Mr. *Brooks*, Entituled *A Cabinet of Choice Jewels*, or a *Box of Precious Oyntment*, Containing eighteen ſpecial Maxims, Conſiderations, Rules and Directions, that are ſeriouſly to be minded and obſerved in order to the clearing up a mans intereſt in Chriſt, the ſaving-work of God upon his own ſoul, and his Title to all the glory of another world.

Alſo declaring ſeveral Evidences and Marks of True ſaving Grace.

12. There is now printed *Londons Lamentations*: Or, a ſober ſerious diſcourſe concerning the late fiery diſpenſation, wherein the procuring cauſes, and the final cauſes of that dreadful diſpenſation

are

are laid open, both upon those who hav
been burnt up, and upon those who hav
escaped those consuming Flames.

Bridges Remains: being eight Ser
mons, *viz.* Of Mans Blessedness: 2. Af
fections Rightly placed. 3. How t
walk with God in our Calling. 4. O
Good and Bad Company. 5. The Car
nality of Professors. 6. What our Work is
and how to be done. 7. Soul Resignati
on into the hands of God. 8. Th
Dignity and Duty of Gods Called Ones
Which was the last that ever wa
preacht by that Learned and Judicious
Divine Mr. *William Bridge*, late Preache
of the Word of God at *Yarmouth*.

A *Discourse of Christs coming*: And the
Influence, which the Expectation there
of hath on all manner of holy Conver
sation and Godliness. By *Theophilus Gale*

*There are some other Pieces of the Re
verend Author of these Sermons preparing
for the Press.*

1 Tim. 1. 5.

Now the end of the Commandment is Charity, out of a pure heart, and of a good Conſcience, and of Faith unfeigned.

THE holy Apoſtle St. *Paul*, as appears in the beginning of the Chapter and Epiſtle, finds ſome at *Epheſus*, who troubled the Church with needleſs, and with fruitleſs Doctrine; and therefore if you conſult the third and fourth Verſes of this Chapter, you will find he beſought *Timothy* to abide at *Epheſus*; when he went into *Macedonia*, that he might charge ſome, that they teach

no other Doctrine ἑτεροδιδασκαλεῖν, Teach Doctrines contrary to what he had taught; or Doctrines contrary to the General Tenour of the Gospel. Such Teachers he calls *accursed*, Gal. 1. 8.

He would have him warn them at the fourth Verse, *Not to give heed to Fables, and endless Genealogies, which minister questions, rather than godly edifying, which is in Faith.* *Timothy* was besought by St. *Paul*, to give this charge to, and concerning the Teachers at *Ephesus*.

And because those Fabulists and Genealogists, were great pretenders to the Law, therefore the Apostle tells them, That the Law leads to the embracing of one another in love; not to the imbroyling of one another in needless questions, or in the venting of them: and this he speaks in the Verse now Read, *The end of the Commandment is Charity out of a pure heart, and of a good Conscience, and of Faith unfained.* In

which words we have two things.

First, An Assertion laid down.

Secondly, We have a limitation to the Assertion.

The Assertion is laid down in the beginning of the Verse, *The end of the Commandment is Charity.*

The Assertion is limited in the close of the Verse, 'Tis *Charity*, not Charity at large, but Charity thus qualified, or thus circumstantiated---- 'Tis *Charity out of a pure heart, and of a good Conscience, and of Faith unfeigned.*

I shall first explicate the Assertion, and then shew its Connexion with the limitation, and give at the present one General Point of Doctrine from the whole Verse.

The end of the Commandment is Charity.

For the explication of this Assertion, I must shew three things.

1. What's meant here by the *Commandment.*

2. What's meant by the *end* of the Commandment.

3. What that *Charity* in ſpecial is, which is the end of the Commandment. And when I have briefly done theſe three things, we ſhall come to a Point.

The end of the *Commandment* is Charity, but what's this *Commandment?*

The word which we here tranſlate Commandment, is παραγγελία, not the ordinary word ἐντολή, which ſignifies a *Commandment*; but παραγγελία; and the word properly ſignifies, as Criticks tell us, A charge given by Judges or Superiours, concerning ſomewhat to be done, or forborn; and thus 'tis uſed in *Acts* 5.28. where the High Prieſts tell the Apoſtles, *Did not we ſtraitly command you, that you ſhould not teach in this Name?* Did not we ſtraitly *Command* you? The Greek there is an Hebraiſm, in which St. *Luke* doth there expreſs the minds of the Scribes and Phariſees

Phariſees, *Did not we ſtraitly* com-
mand you? ὁ παραγγελίᾳ παρηγγείλαμεν,
Did not we command you with a
Command? which we very well
render according to the ſenſe of the
Idiom, Did not we *ſtrictly command*
you? Or as Mr. *Beza* renders it, Did
not we command you again and
again? And in the very ſame ſenſe
doth the Apoſtle uſe the word
παραγγελίαν as the 18th Verſe of the
firſt of *Timothy*: This *charge I com-*
mit unto thee. Why now if we
ſhould take the word Commandment
in this ſtrict ſenſe, it may have a
ſpecial reference to the third and
fourth Verſes going before the Text,
whereas I touch't before, St. *Paul* be-
ſought *Timothy* to charge ſome, that
they teach no other Doctrine, To
charge them, or to Command them.
Tis ἵνα παραγγείλῃς, which is the root
of the word which we render Com-
mandment. I charge thee to lay
this Commandment upon them. So
we may well render it, I command

they teach no other Doctrine. As if he had said, the end why I besought thee to give that charge, or Command, was to promote charity: whereas those other Doctrines, did but breed questions, and those questions breed Contentions among the Churches, and among the Brethren, *the End of the Commandment*, the reason why I gave them that Commandment, was to maintain love among Brethren.

Yea for as much as the Apostle at the *7. vers.* speaks of those who desire to be Teachers of the Law, and in the 8. and *9. verses*, proceeds to speak of the nature and use of the Law, I conceive the Word *Commandment* may be extended to the whole Law of God, or to the whole Revelation, or the mind of God concerning things to be done, or forborn by us. And so here is a figure, here's a change of number, the singular is put for the plural, *Commandment*, for *Commandments*, and

and indeed, as the Doctrine of Grace is nothing elſe but a Collection of promiſes, ſo the Law is nothing elſe, but a Collection of precepts, and in this ſenſe ſaith Mr. *Calvin* here, by the word *Commandment*, we may take in all the Commandments of God. Not only thoſe that are expreſt in the Decalogue, but thoſe which are ſcattered quite through the Holy Scriptures. The end of the Commandment, or of the Commandments, the whole Revealed will of God, concerning the *Agenda*, or things to be done, It is charity, or it is Love; and ſo much for the firſt thing, what we are to underſtand by the Commandment.

Secondly, what is the *end* of the Commandment, the *end* of the Commandment is *charity*. Τέλος *end*, may be taken in a threefold notion.

Firſt, The *end*, it notes the concluſion, and Period of a thing, the concluſion of all things; ſo the Apoſtle *Peter* in his 1 Epiſt. 4. 7. *The*

end of all things is at hand, and it's well for us to Remember that, If the end of all things were at hand in the Apoſtles time, how near is the end now, the end, the Period of all this viſible world, it is at hand, *Be ye therefore watchful, and ſober.*

Secondly, *End*, notes as much as the Aim, deſign, plot, ſcope of any Action, what it is that we drive at; and in that ſenſe 'tis well ſaid, *That the deſire of the end is endleſs*, that is, men will never end their deſirings till they have attained their deſired end, namely, that which is the ſcope, and Aim, which they have ſet up to themſelves in any undertaking: the end of a thing is the Aim, or the ſcope of it.

Appetitus finis eſt infinitus.

Thirdly, End is taken in this notion, It notes the accompliſhment, or the fulfilling and Compleating of a thing, and in that ſenſe it is uſed in *Rom.* 10. 4. *Chriſt* (ſaith *the Apoſtle*,) *is the end of the Law for*

Righte-

Righteouſneſs. The end of the Law, he hath brought the Law to its end------ what end? why to its accompliſhment, to its fulfilling, ſo that we are not to ſeek for righteouſneſs by the Law for our Juſtification, for Chriſt hath made an end of the Law, or accompliſhed the Law, as to that point, for righteouſneſs, Chriſt hath fulfilled the Law, both in doing the precepts of it, and he hath fulfilled the Law by enduring the penalty of it, and ſo he is the end of the Law, the fulfilling end of the Law; It hath no more to require than that we obey the precept, or endure the penalty of it, and both theſe Chriſt hath fully done, and ſo he hath fulfilled the whole Law, and Indeed, Chriſt having done ſo in his own perſon, having been the end of the Law in his obedience, both active and paſſive, I may ſay, He is the *Aboliſhing* end of the Law, he hath taken it away as to that uſe, for Juſtification by our own works, the

Law

Law is quite out of doors, as to that point, Christ is the end of the Law for righteousness, and no more are we to seek for righteousness by the Law.

Why now in the text, the word *end*, when 'tis said that the *end of the* Commandment is charity, the word (*end*) is to be taken in the two latter senses.

First, *charity* is that which the Law aims at, 'tis the scope of the Law, to bring us into a Love one to another, and that we may walk in Love, that's the business of the Commandments of God, the Aim, the Scope of them.

And then secondly, charity is the end of the Law, that is, 'tis the fulfilling of the Law, 'tis the accomplishing end of the Law, the Law is fulfilled in Love, take it in two Scriptures---- *Rom.* 13. 10. *Love is the fulfilling of the Law*, Love it is the Accomplishing end of the Law, as in *Gal.* 5. 14. *The whole Law*

is fulfilled in one word, that's a good word Indeed------ what is that one word, by which the whole Law is fulfilled? 'tis fulfilled in one word, *even in this, thou ſhalt love they Neighbour as they ſelf*: to them, the *end* here, is to be taken in that ſenſe, charity it is the accompliſhing, 'tis the fulfilling of the Law.

Thirdly, One ſtep farther, what is that charity which is the end of the Commandment, both the Final end, and the fulfilling end of it? What is this charity?

Charity is taken two ways in Scripture.

1. More ſtrictly, as it conſiſts in the relieving of thoſe that are poor, and in the comforting of thoſe that are ſorrowful, this is charity, to relieve the poor, to comfort the ſorrowful.

But ſecondly, *charity*, is taken in a more large ſenſe, 'tis taken for Love in General, and ſo ſome tranſlate this text, the end of the Commandment,

mandment, is Love. For *charity* is a word of a narrower ſenſe than *Love* is. The end of the Commandment is Love, and the truth is, the word ἀγάπη, which we render in the text, *charity*, doth Indifferently ſignifie, and is Indifferently tranſlated *Love*, or *charity*, all the New Teſtament over. I need not ſtay to quote places. This word ἀγάπη ſignifies Love to God, Love to Man.

Q. *well but what is Indeed the* Charity, *or* Love, *here Intended in the Scripture?*

A. I anſwer, firſt, I conceive the Love here Intended, Is not love to God, though that is Love above all things, and the moſt excellent end of the Commandment, yet I conceive in this place, 'tis Charity, or Love to Man, which is here meant. And my Reaſon is this, why I reſtrain it here to the Love of Man, becauſe the Apoſtle ſpeaks of charity in oppoſition to thoſe Fables, and queſtions which falſe teachers were like to raiſe up

up in the Church. The end of the Commandment is charity, that all may be peaceable and quiet among the Brethren: and he ſaith at *verſe 7. From which ſome having ſwerved*, (from charity) ſhot quite beſide it, ſaith he, *they are turned aſide unto vain Jangling*, ſo that if we conſider either the Antecedents of the text, or the conſequents, it ſeems he confines *charity*, or *Love* here ſpoken of to that love or charity which is among men, among Brethren, that's one thing.

Secondly, Charity here with reſpect to Brethren, is not that charity which doth conſiſt in opening our hand to relieve the poor, though that is a moſt excellent piece of charity, (and I pray Remember it) to open your hand to the relieving of the poor, yet I conceive that's not the charity here meant, but the charity here meant, is charity in the uniting our hearts, and in the cloſing of our affections one with another, and then,

Thirdly,

Thirdly, The charity here intended, or the Love, is not a lazy habit, for one to say, I have a love for God, I and there it lyes and doth nothing: I say, the charity here intended, is not a lazy habit; but 'tis that which is put forth by vigorous and lively actings, and so some expound this Text; *Charity* is to be taken Metonymically, *Charity*, for all the offices and duties of charity, which we owe one to another.

4. Lastly, As 'tis an Acting, and an active charity, which is here spoken of, so it is not every kind of charity, how vigorously soever acted, which is the end of the Commandment; but 'tis the charity that flows out from, and is fed by those three springs spoken of in the close of the Verse: Namely, 'tis a charity flowing out of a *pure heart, a good conscience, and faith unfeigned.*

I cannot stay now to discover those springs to you; for that would take up too much of the time. Indeed it may take

take up all the time, to make a little discovery of those springs: All that I shall say at present, is only this, That the charity which issues out of these springs: that's the charity in the Text; and that's the charity, which is the fulfilling of the Commandment. So that here we have the Genealogy (as I may call it) the Pedegree, the Parentage of Gospel charity. Or to keep to the former Metaphor, here we have the spring of that blessed River called charity, *the streams whereof* (like the streams of the River spoken of, in *Psal.* 46. 4. which is the favour of God to his people) will *make glad the City of God*, in all the Cities of men, where ever it hath an open chanel, and a free course. By what hath been said (beloved) you may perceive, what my work (the Lord assisting) is like to be in handling this Scripture; namely, to discover to you that Love or Charity, which is the end of the Commandment:

and

and chiefly indeed to discover to you those blessed springs, *A pure heart, a good conscience, and faith unfeigned*, out of which that charity flows, and by which it must be fed day by day. And this will I do, if God permit.

But at the present I shall wave all these particulars, and speak to one General Point (as I hinted before) raised from the whole Context, and of this Verse, or from all the particulars of it laid together: and the Point of Doctrine is this,

DOCT:

Those works of Love, of Love to man; much more of Love to God, which are the end of the Commandment, must flow from a good spring, from a gracious Principle; or a Principle of Grace.

This Point is very plain in the Text, plainly collected from it. For saith the Apostle, *Love out of a pure heart*

heart (and the like). Now that *pure heart*, I ſhall ſhew clearly afterwards (if the Lord bring me to it) that the *pure heart*, is a *gratious heart*. So that the Love muſt flow from a principle of Grace.

There are three things eſpecially in which the Completion, the full Conſtitution and making up of a good work, whether towards God or man doth conſiſt; and they muſt all three concur in the buſineſs. Evil ariſes out of any ſingle defect in that which is required: But a good action muſt have a concurrence of all things requiſite thereunto. I name only theſe three.

Bonum oritur ex integra cauſa, malum ex quolibet defectu.

First, That the work may be good, we muſt be ſure that the matter of it be good. It muſt be good in it ſelf, as being according to Rule. And

What required to a good work.

It muſt be good in the mind and in underſtanding of him that doth it:

for to do that which is good, we not knowing and understanding it to be good, or not being perswaded that it is good, that action is not good to us. Yea, the Apostle tells you, *It is sin, whatsoever is not of faith*: and there he speaks not of *justifying* faith, but of *perswading* faith: what ever is not of faith is sin: And 'tis possible for one that is in a justified state, or one that hath justifying faith, yet not to do a thing with a perswading faith, and so it may be sin to him. That's one thing.

Secondly, The aim, or the end of the work, must be good; and among all ends that are good, the chief, and that which can never be left out, is the glory of God: Matth. 5. 16. *Let your light so shine before men, that they seeing your good works (your works of Love) may glorifie your Father which is in Heaven.* Not glorifie your self, not set up self. 'Twas the setting up of *self*, or the making *self* the end, which corrupt

ed and poiſoned all thoſe materially good, very good actions of the Phariſees, even their alms giving, their praying, their faſting, as you may read at large in *Mat.* 6. 1, 5, 16. and thoſe that follow. The *End* doth denominate the action. It muſt have a good end, elſe though the matter be never ſo good, the work is not good.

Thirdly, (Which is the matter in hand:) The Principle, or ſpring of the work muſt be good: 'Tis poſſible for one to do a work that's good for the matter of it, and to have ſome good ends in it, and yet not to do it out of a right principle: and this is it which the Text and Doctrine ſpeaks, unleſs the Principle be good, the work's not good. As the Fountain is, ſuch are the ſtreams that come from it: As the Tree is, ſuch is the fruit that grows upon it. *Do men gather Grapes of Thorns, or Figs of Thiſtles?* Matth. 7. 16. Why, the Thorn hath not a Principle in Nature to put forth a Grape, the

Thistle hath not a Principle in Nature to put forth a Figg; and therefore saith Christ, *A corrupt Tree cannot bring forth good fruit.* Which words of Christ, as they are primarily to be understood concerning false Prophets and their Doctrine, so they may be truly applyed to all false professors and their ends; they being corrupt, they cannot bring forth good fruit. If you would draw out of a vessel which is unseasoned, or ill scented, the liquor will taste of the Cask. Now we all by nature are unseasoned; yea, we are ill scented vessels, therefore the liquor, that which passes from us, considered so, must needs have an ill scent, an ill taste. And hence that cutting question of Christ to the Pharisees, Matth. 12. 34. *O Generation of Vipers, how can ye being evil, speak good things?* They might possibly speak good for the matter. Bad men wil often tip their tongues with good words, and appear *Chrysostom's*, Golden mouth'd speak-

ers, when their hearts are nothing but brass and dross. But usually evil men speak evil; that which is evil for the matter. *Their throats are an open sepulchre, the poyson of Asps is under their lips,* as the Apostle speaks, quoting it from the *Psalms*, in *Rom.* 3. 13.

And as they usually, and naturally, (for that's their natural Language) speak evil, so they always mar the good they speak, either by their ill manner of speaking it, or by their ill meaning in speaking it. As the Devil when he made a confession of Christ, and said, he was *the Son of the most high God*, it was a confession like that of St. *Peter*, which Christ calls the *Rock* upon which the Church is built; the Devil spake it out of a base intent, and therefore Christ threw it away, and rebuked him for it. So evil men, they spoil good speaking with their ill *manner* of speaking, or their ill *meaning* in speaking; and therefore

Solomon hath that expreſſion, in *Prov.* 26. 7. *As the leggs of the lame are not equal: ſo is a Parable in the mouth of fools.* A Parable there notes a Divine ſaying, a ruling word, a commanding word, that's a Parable, a word that ſhould reign over us, ſo ſaith he, a Parable, a divine ſaying, in the mouth of a fool, are like the leggs of the lame. Good words do (as it were) liſp in the mouth of a bad man, and his *heart* never keeps pace with his *Tongue*. Thus you ſee, Chriſt ſaith, evil men cannot ſpeak that which is good, they cannot ſpeak to the purpoſe fully; now as they that are evil, cannot *ſpeak*, ſo neither can they *do* good things anſwerable to the rule, or pleaſing unto God. I do not ſay, they cannot *do* good things, but they cannot do good things, *anſwerable to the rule*, or pleaſing unto God. And that's the Apoſtles concluſion, *Rom.* 8. 8. after a further diſcourſe, he comes with his *ſo then*

here

here's the concluſion, *ſo then, they that are in the fleſh, they cannot pleaſe God*, every action which comes up to the fulfilling of the Commandment, is pleaſing to God, but ſaith he, they that are in the fleſh, they cannot pleaſe God;---they that are in the fleſh----- what's that? ſurely not that which two Popes (as Infallible as they Judge themſelves to be,) thought to be the meaning; they thought, that by *being in the fleſh*, was meant being in a marriage State. But by *being in the fleſh*, the Apoſtle means, being in a natural, that is, being in an unregenerate State, they cannot pleaſe God, and ſuch do not only not pleaſe God when they do that which is *evil*, but they do not pleaſe God when they do that which is *good*, for the very *Sacrifices of the wicked are an abomination to him*, Prov. 15. 8. and therefore the Apoſtle ſays of all men, in their natural capacity, or State, *there is none that doth good, no not one*, in *Rom.* 3.

12.----- Why none do good? because none of them have a principle, they have not a ſpring, though the matter they do may be good, and though poſſibly they have ſome good end in doing it, yet they not having a principle, there is none of them that doth good, that is, a compleat good, *no not one*, there's no exceptions. I need not labour further in the proof of the point, but I would make ſome uſe of it, and I would make a threefold uſe out.

Uſe. The firſt may be for our Information. If thoſe good works, both to God and Man, which are the fulfilling of the Commandment, muſt flow from a Gratious principle, then we are Inſtructed by this truth, how to Judge of their beſt works who ſtill abide in the State of nature, having neither *a pure heart*, nor *a good Conſcience*, nor *Faith unfeigned*. ----- Why what Judgement are we to make of their works? why

ſurely

ſurely they are not the end of the Commandment, they are not the fulfilling of the Commandment; the works of ſuch, even their works of charity, of love, of temperance, Patience, of Juſtice, were call'd by ſome of the godly learned Antients, *ſhining ſins*, and why we may not call them ſo now, I know no reaſon. That's the Judgement they give of ſuch mens good actions; for as Chriſt tells the Phariſees, *Luke* 16. 15. that which is highly eſteemed among men, is an Abomination unto God. Why? becauſe it wants this principle. And to be ſure, though their box of ointment, I mean the good things done by Perſons who have not theſe principles, I ſay though their box of ointment may have a fragrant ſmell among many men, yet there are many dead flies in it, eſpecially one great one, call'd unbelief, which makes their whole box of ointment very unſavory in the noſtrils of God, for ſo ſaith the Apoſtle, *Heb.* 11. 6.

without faith it is Impossible to please God. And that's one of the springs expresly spoken of in the text; Gospel charity is of a nobler extract than to be found in the whole compass of nature, and Godliness moves in a higher sphere than the best dress that the gayest Moralist ever reacht unto. In *Matth.* 5. 20. *Except your Righteousness exceed the Righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no wise enter into the Kingdom of God.* That's a word for Information.

Use. 2. Now upon that, let me take up a second use by way of Lamentation. If this be a truth, then 'tis to be Lamented that the Religious duties, and charitable Acts of many who bear the name of Christ, flow meerly from a natural principle, and doing so, they are not the fulfilling of the Commandment. The most of men Love one another with affection no more spiritual than *Damon* and *Pithius*, and *Pilades* and *Orestes*,

or

or any other who are moſt memoriſed, or admired among the Heathens for Love. Yea I may ſay; they worſhip God and Jeſus Chriſt with a devotion no more raiſed, and ſpiritual, than the old *Romans* did worſhip their *Jupiter*, or the *Epheſians* their great Godeſs *Diana*. And ſurely this is to be Lamented, that Chriſtian Acts ſhould be done, and not from a principle ſpiritual, or not from a Chriſtian principle. It is very poſſible, and very ordinary to follow Chriſt, yea to call upon Chriſt, meerly with human affections, with Carnal affections. Jeſus Chriſt did find it ſo. In *John* 6. 26. *Ye ſeek me*, ſaith he, *not becauſe ye ſaw the Miracles, but becauſe ye did eat of the loves and were filled.* To follow Chriſt, was an excellent work, but they did it meerly upon a humane principle. Yea, that prayer of theirs in *Verſe* 34. may well be Judged to come meerly from a carnal ſpirit. When Chriſt had diſcourſe of the

bread

bread that came down from Heaven, and giveth life into the World, say they, *Lord, evermore give us of this bread*, and yet this was but from a Carnal desire, not knowing what that bread meant spiritually. And it appears clearly to be so, for in the close of the Chapter, many of his Hearers went quite away, they forsook him. Now certainly to do these excellent things, and to do them but with Carnal principles, this is a thing to be Lamented. *Solomon* doth report it as a thing to be lamented, that often in this world it is done to good men according to the works of the wicked, and it's done to wicked men, according to the works of the righteous : *Eccles.* 8. 14. This is a thing to be lamented, but I now shall shew you two sights more, much more to be lamented.

First, 'Tis a very lamentable thing to see good men do according to the works of the wicked. Thus did *David* in the matter of *Uriah*,

2 *Sam.*

2 *Sam.* 11. Thus did *Solomon*, when his heart went after ſtrange Gods, and he built High Places to their Abominations, 1 *Kings* 11. 4, 5. Thus did *Aſa*, a good King, when he impriſoned the Prophet, and in his diſeaſe ſought to the Phyſitians, and not to God, 2 *Chron.* 16. 10, 12. Yea, thus did St. *Peter* that holy Apoſtle, when he denyed, yea, forſwore his Maſter, in *Matth.* 26. 72, 74. And thus have many other godly men done, under the preſſures of Temptation and Corruption. And is not this a ſad ſight, to ſee one profeſſing Godlineſs, yea, one that is really godly, act thus like a wicked man? This is to act (as I have ſometimes expreſt it) the old Creatures part, in the new Creatures ſtate. This is a very ſad thing.

I, but now I have another ſight to ſhew you, according to the Tenure of this Text and Doctrine, which is very ſad alſo. And what's

that?

that? Why, to see bad men do according to the works of good men, still continuing in their bad state. They plod on, and go on doing good things, but never mind to become good themselves: And so bad men do according to the works of the righteous: I say, This is a sad sight. And thus did *Saul*, when he was among the Prophets: There was a bad man doing good things, 1 *Sam.* 10. And thus did *Ahab*, when he humbled himself; a wicked man doing a very good thing, 1 *Kings* 21. Thus did *Jehu*, when he destroyed Idolatry: A very good work, but a very bad man, 2 *Kings* 10. 28. Thus did *Judas*, when he preacht the Gospel; a very good work, but himself a Traytor. And thus did *Demas*, when he profest the Gospel, and followed the Apostles: A very good work, but himself an hypocrite, and a lover of the world. And thus indeed do all hypocrites, and meer formalists, in their performing of

Gospel

Goſpel worſhip. And thus Chriſt will tell them at the laſt day, as he ſaith, *Matth.* 7. 22, 23. when they came upon him ſo to upbraid him (as it were) with the good things which they had done. *we have propheſied in thy name, we have caſt out Devils in thy Name; we have done many good and mighty works in thy Name*; Saith Chriſt to them, *Depart from me ye workers of iniquity.* Though you did theſe good things, yet you never did them from a ſound principle, from a principle of Grace: No, you your ſelves were ſecret workers, or lovers of iniquity, while you did all theſe good things. Now is not this a ſad ſight? I confeſs, it is a ſad ſight, to ſee a bad man do that which is bad, or a wicked man to do that which is wicked; yet I ſay, it is a ſadder ſight to ſee a bad man continuing in his ſtate, having no ſpiritual principles, to go on doing good: For what is this, but the

juſt

juſt contrary to what I ſpake before. This is the acting of the new Creatures part in the old Creatures ſtate; and what will that avail?

And I would ſay theſe two things further.

God often declares himſelf very highly againſt ſuch as do good, themſelves continuing evil. He declares himſelf weary of their ſervices, eſpecially when there is hypocriſie in them. Iſa. 1. 14. Prov. 21. 27. *The ſacrifice of the wicked is abomination, how much more when he bringeth it with a wicked mind?* That is, when he brings it for baſe ends, hoping by his ſacrifice to ſatisfie God for his ſin. Some hope by their good works to turn away the wrath of God; and they hope to get Heaven by their good prayers, and by their alms (and the like). I ſay, when a man doth a good thing, with ſuch an evil mind as this, hoping to ſatisfie the Juſtice of God, and

turn

turn away his wrath by his doings; this is now abomination to God. Or when he hopes that God will be well pleaſed with him, in that he brings him a ſacrifice, doth him ſome outward ſervice, though he goes on in his ſin. Theſe are thoſe the Lord doth ſo often proteſt againſt.

And I would ſay to them further: The good you do in that ſtate, not having a ſpiritual Principle, the good that you do will not profit you, 'twill not advantage you; 'twill be no plea in the great day. All the profit you can have by it at moſt, when you have had the utmoſt that it comes to, it is but ſome external or outward mercy. As *Ahab*, he humbled himſelf: why, he had ſomewhat for it; he had his penny: and therefore ſaith the Lord, *Seeſt thou how* Ahab *humbleth himſelf? The Judgement ſhall not come in his dayes.* A deliverance from an outward Judgement: but here was no deliverance from wrath, and from eternal

Judgement. And ſo *Jehu*, for the good works that he did, he had ſomewhat; but alas, what was it? Indeed a great thing in the eyes of the world, a Kingdom; and a Kingdom for ſeveral Generations. But the truth is, A poor thing, for that was all indeed he had for his zeal in deſtroying Idolatry. He had the Kingdom for four Genenerations; but he abiding a wicked man, while he did that good thing, himſelf was cut off for ever. And you ſee the Ruler in *Mark* 10. 21. who came to Chriſt, and told him, how he had done almoſt all the matters of the Law: why, Jeſus Chriſt ſaw indeed he had done them, but he knew he had not done them from a right principle; and therefore what was it that Chriſt gave him? Saith he, *he beheld him, and loved him.* A love of pity, as ſome expound the place. O it's a pity that ſuch a perſon as thou art, that thou haſt been a keeper of the Law, yet haſt not done it upon a

right principle. And that he did not, it is plain; for when Christ put him home he went away sorrowful. Now all that he had for it, Christ gave him some approbation: and as he did to that other in Mark 12. 34. *Thou art not far from the Kingdom of God.* I, but he was so far, as he should never come there, unless he changed his state. So that I say, The Condition of those that do good things, not out of a good principle, is indeed very lamentable, upon these and many other accounts.

But possibly you will say, If it be so, That they who do good, not out of a right principle, their work will not turn to their profit; and therefore their case is to be lamented. If it be so, Were it not best to advise those who yet remain unconverted, to forbear doing good till themselves are better?

I answer, No, by no means. We give no such advice in the matter: but let all men do all the good they

can. And I would exhort the worſt of men to do good: To hear the Word preacht, to pray, to give alms. *Daniel* gave that counſel to *Nebuchadnezzar* a Heathen King, *Dan.* 4. 27. The Apoſtle *Peter* gave that counſel to *Simon Magus*, whom he ſaw to be *in the gaul of bitterneſs, and in the bonds of iniquity.* And that the good that he had done, his receiving Baptiſm, and outward profeſſion of faith, it was ſo far from coming from a good principle, that he was in the very gall of bitterneſs; yet ſaith he, pray, if it may be, thy ſins may be forgiven thee. Though men are evil, yet let them do good as far as they can: and I would ſay theſe three things about it.

First, They are under an obligation to do good. For mans inability to perform a duty rightly, doth not take off the obligation which is upon him to perform it. And though a bad man ſins in his manner of doing it, yet his refuſing to do it, would be more ſinful. And

And I would ſay further, Though he pleaſe not God in doing it, yet he diſpleaſes God in not doing it: So that indeed, man naturally conſidered, or in his fallen ſtate, is fallen into a very ſad *Dilemma*. If he neglect to do good, he ſins. If he doth good, he ſpoils it in the doing of it. But notwithſtanding all this (I ſay) I am far from diſcouraging the worſt of men to do good, or to adviſe any to forbear to do good. No, I would convince all, that their preſent ſtate is bad; and exhort all to apply themſelves to all means whereby themſelves may be made better. And that's the third Uſe which I ſhall briefly make of this point, and ſo I ſhall conclude.

Uſe 3. Is it ſo, That thoſe good works that flow from a good Principle are pleaſing to God? Why then we ſee the neceſſity of Regeneration. Chriſt ſaith in 3 John 3. *Verily, verily*. There's a ſtrong and a double

asseveration: *Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a man be born again, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.* We are not born with this *pure heart*, with this *good conscience*, with this *faith unfeigned*, which are the requisites to a *good work* in the Text. We are not born with these; for *who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one.* Not one among the sons of men. Job 14. 4. *A pure heart*, a good conscience, faith unfeigned, are the issues of the new birth. *Education* cannot make the heart pure; It must be *Revelation* which makes the heart pure. Good Education it may change the Life and the Conversation. As they say, To study Arts and Philosophy, it takes off the roughness that is in mans nature, and doth smooth them, and frame them very much for excellent uses. Good literature and education, it may civilize, but it cannot spiritualize.

—didicisse fideliter artes
Emollit mores———

It

It may change a mans courſe, but it cannot change his nature, that's only done by Regeneration. Now I ſay, a mans ſtate, his nature muſt be changed; he muſt have a pure heart, which we never have till our natures are changed. He muſt *be* good before he can *do* good ſpiritually. Mark that word of the Apoſtle, Epheſ. 2. 10. *We are his workmanſhip created in Chriſt Jeſus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we ſhould walk in them.* Mark it, here are good works. But how do we come to theſe good works? Why, *we are his workmanſhip*, ſaith he, we are his ποίημα. God works us, before we can work for him: he makes us good, before we can do good. Saith he, *We are his workmanſhip.* And then, created, or ſo created in Chriſt Jeſus to good works. We by union to Jeſus Chriſt, come to have a ſpiritual principle to carry us out in the doing of all good works. Here's your way.

You must be Gods workmanship, before you can do Gods work: You must be new creatures, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, before you can do them.

A Crab-tree will never yield pleasant fruit, untill you change the nature of it. Take a Crab-tree and plant it in the best soil that you have, and water it, and dress it, and prune it as much as you can, yet this Crab-tree will bear nothing but Crabs, sowre fruit, till you come to graft it; and then your grafting of it, doth change the nature of the stock, and it hath another principle, and so then it brings forth good fruit. So it is in this case. Take the best natured man in the world, plant him in the best soil, in the best ground, in Church-ground, plant him in the house of God, and there let him be watered by the rain of holy Doctrine, and let him be dresst and cultivated every day, yet he will bring forth nothing but Crabs, nothing but unsa-

voury

youry fruit, till he himſelf be changed. Though he be under all thoſe ſpiritual means, yet till thoſe means have wrought effectually in him, his actions are all unſavoury. 'Tis only by our implantation into Jeſus Chriſt, that we become fit to do good, ſo as is acceptable unto God. 'Tis this that makes the change. For as in nature, the graft doth change the ſtock; ſo in grace, the ſtock doth change the grafted branch. As we are grafted into Chriſt, he changes the branch; being planted into Chriſt, by the power of the Spirit, we are then made like him; and then we bring forth fruits of righteouſneſs, which are to the glory of God *by him*. Mark the expreſſion, *Being filled with the fruits of righteouſneſs, which are by Chriſt*. That is, by vertue of union with Chriſt, of implantation and ingrafture into Chriſt. When once it is thus, then all your fruits are ſweet fruit, and pleaſant fruit, it is well taſted.

tasted. Why, it is done First, From a principle of life in Christ. And Secondly, It is done from a principle of Love unto Christ: and then when your works, whether respecting God or man are thus done, then they are the fulfilling, and the final end of the Commandment. For then they come from the pure heart. Of which hereafter (if God will, I may speak). And so much at the present of the point in General, That until there be a good Principle, there cannot be a good work.

SERMON

SERMON II.

Jan. 6. 1672.

1 TIM. 1. 5.

Now the end of the Commandment is Charity, out of a pure heart, and of a good Conſcience, and of Faith unfeigned.

HAving ſhewed that every good work which is to anſwer to the Commandment of God, muſt flow from a good ſpring,

I ſhall now come to ſpeak of the ſprings

ſprings from whence they flow. Beginning with that which is firſt in the Text, *A pure heart*. The end of the Commandment, is charity, *out of a pure heart*. A *pure heart* is the point I am now to ſpeak to, and the matter I am to make diſcovery about. It being in order, in this Text, the firſt of thoſe three moſt bleſſed ſprings, out of which all duties well pleaſing unto God muſt proceed.

A pure heart. Two things are here to be ſpoken to.

Firſt, What is meant by *heart*. And,

Secondly, What by purity of heart: And ſo put both together, *A pure heart*.

For the firſt I need not ſtay to ſpend time to ſhew you, what is meant by the *heart*: It being that which you have ſo often heard.

By *heart*, the Scripture often intends the whole inner man.

And ſometimes it intends ſome ſpecial

ſpecial faculties of the inner man. The *underſtanding* is noted by the *heart*; the *will* by the *heart*; the *affections* by the *heart*; the *conſcience* by the *heart*. And in this large ſenſe we are to take the word *heart* here: only bating the reference of it unto *Conſcience*, which is ſpoken of as the ſecond diſtinct ſpring from whence good actions flow.

The *heart* then here, is the *underſtanding*, the *will*, the *affections*. Indeed what ever lyes in the boſome of man, you may call his *heart*. Yet I ſhall not proſecute the point in this diſtinctneſs of theſe particular faculties of the ſoul; ſhewing how the *underſtanding* is pure, which is by its freedome from error, and clear light in divine truths. How the *will* is pure, which is, by its freedom from the bondage, from the obſtinacy and rebellion, which doth naturally, wholly poſſeſs it: and by having a freedome in chooſing good, and refuſing that which

is

is evil. Nor ſhall I ſtay ſtrictly to ſhew what the purity of the affections is; namely, their freedom from all inordinacy and irregularity, either as to the object upon which they are fixt; or as to the meaſure and degree in which they are fixt upon thoſe objects.

That which I ſhall do indeed, ſhall be to ſpeak to the *Heart*, and ſo of the purity of it in a general notion, as it concerns the whole inner man.

And the *heart* as to *purity*, may be conſidered two wayes,

Firſt, As Made,

Secondly, As Re-made.

The *heart* of man as made, was pure; I mean, in its primitive Conſtitution. So *Adam* had a pure heart; his *underſtanding* pure, his *will* pure, his *affections* pure. God made him upright; but he loſt his pure heart, or the purity of his heart. Sin did impure his whole inner man; and he being our Re-

pre-

preſentative, loſt purity of heart, not only for himſelf, but for us. All mankind loſt that *made* purity of heart when *Adam* fell. And therefore the very firſt Complaint which the Lord made of the Fallen World, was concerning the pravity and impurity of their hearts, in Gen. 6. 5. *God ſaw that the wickedneſs of man was great in the earth,* [that's wickedneſs of Life,] *and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.* By this we ſee to purpoſe, That the firſt *made* purity of the heart was loſt. Here are ſo many particulars ſetting forth the evil of mans heart, as plainly ſhews, that it is nothing but evil. Here's the evil of his *Imaginations*, The Imagination of the *Thoughts* of his heart. And not here and there one, but *every* imagination of the thoughts of his heart; it was *evil.* And not evil with ſome mixture of good, but purely evil. It was evil with-

out any goodneſs in it: and there-fore ſaith he *Only evil.* Nor was it in this impure ſtate, only for a *fit*, or now and then: but ſaith the Text, *Continually* evil; or as the Hebrew is, *every day.* Day by day, which we render *Continually.* So that now the *made* pure heart was loſt; and no man hath a pure heart by nature; nor hath any man a heart leſs impure by nature, than another man hath. Our hearts in nature are all of a make; and that's ſtark naught. So ſpake the Prophet *Jeremy* likewiſe in *Jer.*17.10. The heart of man is deceitful *above all things.* The heart of man is the greateſt cheat in the world, and the greateſt Impoſtor in the world: and ſaith he, 'tis *deſperately wicked*; and 'tis ſo wicked, that the wickedneſs of it is beyond Humane Comprehenſion: The wickedneſs of it is beyond the knowledge of man *who knows it?* Neither he that has the heart, nor any other that ſee

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him that hath it, knows how wicked the heart of man is. And pray take notice, That the Prophet doth not ſpeak there of ſome ſort of vile, baſe, debauched, wicked men, whoſe hearts were ſo deceitful and wicked; but he ſpeaks of men in general, as they are in nature: And much of that deceitfulneſs and wickedneſs remains, even when they are in Grace. We may therefore conclude, (at leaſt in this matter) alluding to that of *Solomon* in the *Proverbs, Chap.* 27. 19. *As in water, face anſwereth to face; ſo the heart of man to man.* There are ſome that do trouble the water in that Text, with various Interpretations, I ſhall not ſtay upon them. But all that I alledge the Text for, is to ſhew, That look what there is in one mans heart naturally, the ſame is in anothers. Juſt as he that looks into the water; the face in the water upon which he looks, anſwers his own face looking into it: So

doth the heart of man to man. The hearts of all good men, of persons regenerate, do answer one another in the main. Look what the heart of one godly man is, the same is the heart of another godly man in the main, though there may be particular differences. And so, take all men in their natural condition. Look what the heart of one man is, the same is the heart of another; and all stark naught. So then, there's now no pure heart in nature. Seeing the *made* pure heart is lost, we must then consider the *heart* as re-made pure.

Here is a pure heart in the Text: 'Tis a heart re-made pure. A heart made pure by a gracious Restitution. And mark it, I say, it is a heart *re-made*. It is not a heart *mended*; that will not serve the turn. The heart of man received such a crack in the fall, that there is no mending of it: It must be new made. Therefore I say, the pure heart is a heart re-made

re-made, new made. As we commonly ſay of a Bell, if a Bell receive a crack, there is no mending of it: You cannot mend a Bell, as you may mend a Braſs Pan, by putting a piece to it: There is no way to mend a crackt Bell, but by new caſting it; it muſt to the Founder. Truly thus it is with mans heart; there is no mending it, no putting a patch to it; no repairing it, as you may repair a houſe that is delapidated. No, it muſt be new made: and therefore the pure heart which is here ſpoken of in the Text, in other Texts is called *a new heart*, Ezek. 36. 25, 26. It is not a *mended* heart, but it is a *new heart*. *I will take away the heart of ſtone.* The former heart is an *heart of ſtone*; a heart that hath no more of remorſe in it; no more of ſoftneſs or tenderneſs in it, than a ſtone: I will *take away* the heart of ſtone. He doth not ſay, I will *mend* the heart of ſtone, but I will *take it away*.

That is, I will take away the heart, ſo far as it is ſtony; *And I will give you an heart of fleſh*: that is, a *new heart*, an heart of fleſh. The *re-made* heart is a heart made wholly new: It is made wholly new by the power of God; and I may give it you in theſe four things.

This *pure heart*, of which I am ſpeaking, is purified or made new.

Firſt, Meritoriouſly by the blood of Chriſt. For it is by *blood* that things are purified and purged; as the Author to the *Hebrews* doth diſcourſe at large, eſpecially in the ninth Chapter of the Epiſtle, Ver. 22. *Almoſt all things are by the Law purged with blood; and without ſhedding of blood is no Remiſſion.* The heart is made pure,

Firſt, By the blood of Chriſt, that cleanſing blood: *The blood of Chriſt cleanſeth from all ſin.*

Secondly, It is purified or made pure, by the Spirit of Chriſt; there-

fore we find theſe two put together, 1 Pet. 1. 2. *Through ſanctification of the Spirit unto obedience, and ſprinkling of the blood of Jeſus Chriſt.* As we are purified through the ſprinkling of the blood of Jeſus Chriſt; ſo through the ſanctification of the Spirit. The Spirit is pure, and the Spirit is a purifier. The Spirit is compared to *water*: the Spirit is compared to *fire*, that purifies, that fetches out the droſs and the filth, and makes all pure. And indeed, the impurity which is in the heart of man, is ſuch, as nothing leſs than the blood of Chriſt, and therefore *of the Spirit* can purge it out. The fire of *afflictions* will not purge out the impurities of the heart. The fire of *Hell* will not fetch out the droſs that is in the hearts of the damned. Nothing but the blood of Chriſt, nothing but the Spirit of Chriſt, are able to do it. The blood of Chriſt meritoriouſly, the

Spirit efficiently, and efficaciously. And then,

Thirdly, The heart re-made pure, is so made *Instrumentally* by the *word. The word of God is pure, it is as Silver purified in the fire seven times.* And the Word of God is a purifier instrumentally; and the usual way by which the heart is *re-made* pure, is by the Word. Christ saith, John 15. 3. *Ye are clean*: How? *Through the word that I have spoken.* And in general, the Apostle in *Ephes.* 5. 22, 26. saith, That Jesus Christ doth sanctifie and cleanse his Church, *with the washing of water, by the word.* With the washing of water, that is, with the Spirit. But what's the instrument? *By the word.* This way is purity of heart commonly and usually wrought by the Word. And,

Fourthly, The heart is made pure applicatorily by Faith, Acts 15. 9. *He put no difference between us and them* (saith the Apostle) that is, betwee

between *Jews* and *Gentiles*, having *purified their hearts by faith*. God works faith in the heart, and then faith purifies the heart by applying the blood of Chriſt, and by receiving the Spirit, and by working the ſoul to a ſubmiſſion to the holy *word* and *will* of God. So that thus in theſe wayes the heart is re-made pure: and of this re-made pure heart, it is that the Text ſpeaks. That's the ſpring out of which holy and acceptable works to the Lord doth flow.

Obj. But ſome may ſay, Is there any ſuch thing as a pure heart? We find thoſe queſtions ſomewhat riſe in the Book of Job, *What is man, that he ſhould be clean?* So in Chap. 15. 14. *Or how can he be clean, that is born of a woman?* Chap. 25. 4. And *Solomon* ſaith expreſly, in Prov. 20. 9. *Who can ſay, I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my ſin?* It is plain then by theſe Scriptures, that there

is no such thing as a pure heart.

Answ. I answer briefly, in three things to these Scriptures, and to all Scriptures of a like Import. When the Scripture speaks thus, It doth teach us, either,

First, that no man is born with a pure heart; or it teaches us,

Secondly, That no man by his own power hath made his heart pure; or,

Thirdly, it teaches us that no heart is made pure in this world with an absolutely perfect purity. Indeed the best purity which the heart attains to in this world, hath a mixture of much impurity in it: so that thus indeed there is no heart pure. That is, there is no heart *Legally* pure, *strictly* pure; but there are thousands of hearts through Grace, that are sincerely pure, that are *Evangelically* pure, and so esteemed in the thoughts of God, and so expresst in his word.

If any shall say, you tell us there

is an Evangelical purity, what mean you by it? when may the heart be ſaid to be Evangelically pure?

When the heart may be ſaid to be Evangelically pure.

I anſwer thus, the heart is Evangelically pure, though there be ſin dwelling in us, or an in-dwelling ſin, and though ſin is ſtirring, hath ſtrong motions in us, makes war in our ſouls from day to day, though ſin doth ſome times prevail, and give us that foil; yet notwithſtanding all this, when,

Firſt, the ſoul is free from the Command of every ſin,

Secondly, When the ſoul is freed from the cuſtomary practice of every ſin; and,

Thirdly, When the ſoul is free from the love of any ſin, then the ſoul is Evangelically pure. Indeed ſin will hide, ſin will ſtirr, and I cannot warrant any man in the world, that is a man of the pureſt heart in the world, but that his ſin may poſſibly

possibly give him a foil. But this is certain, he that hath an Evangelical purity, is free from the commanding power of sin, and from that constant, and customary practice of sin; and from the love of sin. A man of a pure heart, may have a special sin, that is, a sin to which he is more inclined than to any other. Sometimes through the constitution of his body, sometimes through his occasions, and in the way of his calling; there are many things which do indanger men to some special sin, now though I say a good man may have a special sin, a sin that he finds his heart most running out after, in which sense *David* call's some iniquities, *his Iniquity*, Psal. 111. 23. *I have kept my self* (saith he) *from mine Iniquity*, that is, from the Iniquity that did most beset him. A good man then, may have a special sin, which haunts him, which dogs him, and besets him, but yet he hath not a *beloved* sin; Evangelical purity,

purity, and the *love* of ſin, cannot conſiſt together, he that hath a pure heart, cannot play with his ſin, cannot ſport with his ſin, cannot take content in thinking of ſin, either paſt, or what may be to come. As they in the Prophet, *this day is thus with us, and to morrow ſhall be more abundant.* No, he cannot pleaſe himſelf thus, in reference to any ſin. So that I conclude it, the pure heart is freed, (if he be Evangelically freed) from ſin in all theſe notions, and ſo he is the Perſon here meant in the text, from whom all holy actions may proceed acceptably to the Lord; and that may ſerve for the opening of this point, for I intend to diſpatch it at this time.

I ſhall make ſome uſe of it.

Uſe. Firſt, To ſtir up all to conſider, whether they have this pure heart yea or no. You ſee the importance of it, it is one of the ſprings out of which every action that is

pleaſing

pleaſing to God, according to his appointment muſt flow, therefore it ſtands us much upon, leſt we looſe all things that we work, To have a good aſſurance in our own boſoms, that we have a pure heart in our boſoms; and we had need conſider it. For,

First, 'tis moſt ſure that many think they have pure hearts, and have them not. *Solomon* hath an expreſſion; ſaith he, *there are a Generation that are pure in their own own eyes, and yet are not cleanſed from their wickedneſs*, Chap. 30. 12. It's an eaſie matter to be pure in our own eyes, and yet remain altogether unclean? *A Generation pure in their own eyes.* And St. *Auguſtin* ſpeaks of a ſort of people; who would needs be called *Cathoriſts*, and (ſaith he) they do *call themſelves* ſo, they moſt proudly; and odiouſly call themſelves, the pure ones. But according to his diſcovery of them, they were not cleanſed from their wicked-

neſs;

neſs; and how many are thus indeed, clean in their own eyes, and yet are unclean. And,

Secondly, There are many that are clean, not only in their own eyes, but in the eyes of other men, yea poſſibly in very good men, Godly men, clean in their eyes, and yet for all this, they are not cleanſed from their filthneſs. Our Lord Jeſus Chriſt detecting the hypocriſy of the *Phariſees*, ſaith, that they were like *whited ſepulchers, which appear fair to men, but within are full of dead mens bones, and rottenneſs.* Thus it is with many, very many in the world, they appear very beautiful, like a brave ſepulcher, painted, and gilded, have poſſibly a very pure *hand*, you can ſee no evil they do; they have poſſibly a very pure *Tongue*, you can hear of no evil they *ſpeak*. Speak even as they in *Deut.* 5. 28, 29. of whom the Lord ſaith, *they have well ſaid in all that they have ſpoken*, ſaith God to *Moſes*, they

they have well done indeed, in all that they have ſpoken? I but they did little of that which they had ſpoken. Many are very good in the ſight of other Men, but not ſo in the ſight of God, he doth eaſily diſcover their Impurities, and let me tell you, their are many that diſcover their own Impurity, and of whom we may conclude, that they have no pure heart, while we conſider the groſs Impurities of their lives. Indeed ſome carry it cloſely, and others profainly, and as the Lord ſpeaks in *Jer.* 2. 34. *Their ſin is in their skirts*, you need not dig for it, ſaith, God, *I have not found it by ſecret ſearching*, or by digging, their ſin is in their skirts. It is ſo with many, their ſin is in their skirts, and you need not dig to find it out, the impurities of their life do plainly ſhew the impurity of their hearts. The Prophet *Micha* puts the queſtion, *Chap.* 6. 11. *Shall I count them pure with the wicked ballances, and with the bag*

bag of deceithful weights? ſhall I count them pure? do you think he hath a good heart, who hath ſuch a life as this, willing to deceive, and willing to wrong his Brethren, or thoſe that he deals with? ſo we may carry on the Prophets chiding queſtion to many and many. Shall we count them pure whoſe eyes are full of Adultery? Shall we count them pure whoſe hands are full of blood? Shall we count them pure whoſe houſes are full of oppreſſion? Shall we think them pure whoſe mouths are full of curſing and oaths, of ſcurility? Shall we count them pure whoſe mouths and Tongues are often tipt with ſcofs againſt purity? why the impurity of theſe mens hearts breaks out, *the ſhew of their countenance doth teſtifie againſt them,* that *they declare their ſin as* Sodom, *they hide it not.* You ſee then there are a number that want this purity of heart. Conſider them firſt, who are pure in their own eyes, and have great

great thoughts of their own purity. Consider, secondly, those that have a great opinion for purity among men, they appear to others so, and yet the Lord sees they are not so. And then, if you go abroad to the profain world, who proclaim their impurities, and glory in their impurity. And therefore to urge that a little further,

How may we know where there is purity of heart, that Evangelical purity which I spake of before? In opening the words, take a few touches as to the discovery of a pure heart.

Discoveries of a pure heart.

First, he that Indeed hath a pure heart, is very sensible that once he had an impure heart, as *David* in *Psal.* 51. *In sin was I conceived, and brought forth in Iniquity.* *David* was a man of a pure heart. He was very sensible that once his heart was very impure. And,

Secondly, He that hath a pure heart is sensible that to this day there remains

remains much impurity in his heart; and the purer any ones heart is, the more doth he mourn under his heart impurities. And,

Thirdly, He that hath a pure heart, loves every thing that is pure, and the more pure it is, the more he loves it, the more he approves it. Here's a pure heart; *Phil.* 1. 10. *He approves the things that are excellent.* Things that *differ*, so the word is. That is, things that differ in a way of *excellency*, not only things that differ, as *good*, and *bad* differ, but things that differ as *good* and *good* differ; for there's a *gradual* difference between good and good, as there is a *specifical* difference between good and evil; as there is a difference between wheat and cockle, so there is a difference between wheat & wheat: As there is a difference between Gold and Copper, so there is a difference between Gold and Gold. There's the Gold of Ophyr, the most pure

Gold. Now I ſay, he that hath a pure heart, he loves all that is pure, and the more pure any thing is, the more he loves it. That's the meaning of the Apoſtle, he approves things that differ in a way of excellency, not only as good differs from evil, but as one good differs from another. If there be any thing which is more excellent than another, he is for that. Here's your pure heart then. And,

Fourthly, A pure heart will be full of pure thoughts, or you will be ſure that no impure thoughts ſhall have any welcome in you; a pure heart converſes chiefly with God in purity of thoughts, and good thoughts; as the *wicked* are diſcribed, *Pſal.* 10. to be ſuch *as have not God in all their thoughts*, they have not the pure God, nor the holy God in all there thoughts, that is, God is not at all in their thoughts to any purpoſe. So we may ſay of the pure heart, God

is in all his thoughts, or he would fain have his thoughts always upon God. And so those that the Lord accounts his Jewels are discribed, *Mal.* 13. 16. Saith he, I will deal thus and thus with them that fear me, and that *think upon my name.* Mark, that *think* upon my name. A great part of our spiritual purity, is to be often *thinking upon the pure* God: The pure heart (I say) is often full of pure thoughts, and you may take measure of the purity of your hearts very much, by considering what your thoughts are. And,

Fifthly, your heart is full of pure and good desires, *thoughts* are single acts and puttings forth of the soul upon such and such objects and subjects, but *desires* they are wrought up into such or such a special point: a pure heart is full of good desires, and especially he desires to be more good, to be better, he desires to know more of God, and to honour

God more, he desires to enjoy God more, he hungers and thirsts after God. And what's the hunger and thirst of the soul? 'Tis spiritual desires: *desire* is the hunger and thirst of the soul. Now a pure heart is full of these desires, and these are the most spiritual discoveries of him that hath a pure heart. Let him consider what his desires are, what he would have: *Isa.* 26. *With my soul have I desired thee.* Mark your desires. And then,

Sixthly, If you you have this pure heart, you will not only have many pure desires, but you will have purposes, pure resolves, you will be full of good resolves, and by resolves the heart is fixt, fastened, settled, resolution is the establishment of the soul; now a pure heart is full of pure resolves, and purposes. The resolves and purposes are of two kinds.

First, He purposes and resolves

to adhere and cleave to that which is good. Thus he doth resolve with himself, fall back, fall edge, let the winds blow high or low, this I am resolved, this is my purpose, to cleave to Christ, and that which is good, as that good man *Barnabas* is said to exhort the people, *Acts.* 11. 23. *He exhorted them, that with purpose of heart they would cleave to the Lord, with purpose of heart.* Holy purposes they are are as the Glew, by which our hearts are fastened to the Lord Jesus Christ, I exhort you with purpose of heart that you would cleave to Christ.

And then there is a purpose in a pure heart, against all that is evil, against all that is Impure: *Daniel* 1. That holy man *Daniel*, *Verse* 8. saith the Text, *Daniel purposed in his heart, that he would not defile himself* with the portion of the Kings meat; he was resolved

of that; now he hath a pure heart indeed, who purpoſes that he will never defile himſelf, his *heart*, nor his *life* neither. And indeed, ſuch purpoſes have they that have pure hearts, of one kind or of another. Yea ſometimes we find holy ones heigthening their purpoſes to *vows*, yea to *oaths*. *I have ſworn*, ſaith David, *that I will keep thy righteous Judgements*; here were ſtrong purpoſes indeed. And then,

Seventhly, He that hath this pure heart, certainly hath pure ends in all that he doth, He hath a holy Aim, he hath a ſingle eye, this is a great evidence of a pure heart, when we have pure Aims, Chriſt calls that the ſingle eye, *Matth.* 6. 23. *If thine eye be ſingle*, that is, If thy ends, and Aims, that which thou lookeſt at, If they are ſingle, ſincere, pure, *the whole body ſhall be full of light*. An pure heart, the ends that he

 propoſes

proposes, are not *self*, not self-profit, not self-applause, not pleasure; But he purposes the profit of many that they may be saved, or the good of all with whom he converses. He proposes these great ends, which he carries quite through all unto the end. And that is, that he may exalt the name of the Lord by all. O look to your ends, the purity of your hearts, will appear in the purity of your Aims, and of your ends: and so much for that first thing, for conviction, and discovery about this purity of heart.

Use. 2. Secondly, Let it be a word of exhortation, and that in two branches.

First, If there be such a thing as a pure heart, and that be of such importance, then weigh it well, whether you have this pure heart, consider it by all that hath been

fore spoken concerning an Evangelical pure heart, and the evidences thereof; and I would say this for the urging of it, that we all should look to this matter, the purity of our hearts.

First, The hardest thing that we have to do, is the purifying of our hearts, and the greatest kindness which God can do us, is to cleanse our hearts. The cleansing of the heart is the hardest piece of work, it is comparatively an easie thing to cleanse the hand, comparatively an easie thing to cleanse the *Tongue*, and to have that pure, but to have the heart purified, there's the great stick. And then,

Secondly, Look to the purity of your hearts, for they have certainly need of purifying. They whose hearts are still in their first natural state, they have need indeed, and they who are in a spiritual state, have need of daily purifying, look

(I ſay) therefore to the purifying of your hear s, for they have need to be purified, they are the filthieſt part of us: If there be impurity in the *hand*, there's much more in the *heart*; and then,

'Tis indeed a vain thing. to go about to puriſy the hand, or Tongue, or life, if the heart be Impure. 'Twere a vain thing for any one to go and cleanſe a ſtream, while he know's that there is a Fountain above that ſends forth filthy, and unclean, and poyſonous water. 'Tis juſt ſo in this caſe; till the heart be made pure, nothing can be pure.

And the great eſteem which God hath of us, is with reſpect to this purity of heart. He is a friend indeed to thoſe who have a pure heart, he hath a great reſpect for them. There is an expreſſion, in *Prov.* 22.11. *He that loveth pureneſs of heart, for the grace of his lips*

the

the King ſhall be his friend, mark there; the *pureneſs of heart*, and *grace of lips*. By grace of lips, he means, not only *graceful* ſpeech, but *gracious* ſpeech. Now grace in the lips you ſee hath its dependance upon the pureneſs of the heart, and ſaith he, he that hath ſuch a pureneſs of heart, as that from it he hath a graceful lip, *the King ſhall be his friend*. Doubtleſs *Solomon* ſpake this with reference to himſelf, ſhewing what a friend he would be to thoſe that appeared before him in pureneſs of heart, and this graciouſneſs of their lips. But this is much more true in reference to the King of Heaven. He that loveth pureneſs of heart, for the grace of of his lips, the King of Heaven ſhall be his friend, he ſhall be accepted of God. And what grace ſoever that is, gracefulneſs of ſpeech any one hath, if there be not pureneſs of heart, he ſhall have no favour with

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the King of Heaven, what ever he may find among any of the Kings of the Earth. O this therefore is the great thing, *my Son* [illegible] *Solomon, give me thy heart.* That's it which the Lord doth so much delight in, *Prov.* 23. 26. *My Son, give me thy heart.* What heart must it be? Not an unclean heart, not a filthly heart, not a proud heart, not a covetous heart, not a malitious heart, not an uncharitable heart, but *my Son give me thy heart*; give me thy heart purified, purged, cleansed. Or thus, give me thy heart, resign it up to me to be purified, to be purged, to be cleansed, to be made holy. Indeed we may give our proud hearts up to God, and beg of him that he would humble them, But we must not think to keep our hearts proud, and give them up to God proud; and we may give our unclean hearts to God, begging of him that he would cleanse

them,

them, but we muſt not keep unclean hearts in our boſoms, and then ſay, we give up our hearts to God. The heart in which God is pleaſed, and in with he takes delight, is the pure heart; therefore upon all theſe Conſiderations, let us be much looking after the purity of our hearts. And then.

Secondly, Do you find that according to Scripture rule, you have a pure heart, Then I have a ſecond word to ſay. Pray do what you can to keep your hearts pure: For they who have pure hearts may quickly find their hearts very impure, unleſs they look narrowly to it. A heart that is made pure, will be greatly impured unleſs we watch, and keep it pure. *Solomon* hath that expreſſion, in *Prov.* 4. 23. *keep thy heart with all diligence*, ſaith he, *For out of it are the Iſſues of life*: keep thy heart, keep it with all diligence, with all manner of keeping; you

ſee

ſee then, it is not enough to get a pure heart; but we muſt keep our hearts, and keep them clean. As 'tis in this caſe with your houſes, you do not only *make* them clean, but you *keep* them clean: and if a houſe be made never ſo clean, yet it will contract defilement. Duſt will be upon it, unleſs it be kept clean, unleſs it be watcht that none throw dirt into it. Indeed we had need in keeping our hearts, to watch them continually: and that's the great buſineſs of keeping our hearts, for the Devil if we do not watch our hearts, he will do one of theſe two things.

He will either ſteal away our heart: for the Devil comes a heart-ſtealing continually; and eſpecially when you are at a Sermon, or a holy duty; and if he can but ſteal away your *hearts*, he cares not how many Bodies there are here.

Or

Or he will be throwing dirt into your hearts, ſuggeſting wickedneſs: He will throw dirt into the inner cloſet of your hearts, by his Temptations, by his Injections. Therefore if you would keep your hearts clean, you muſt watch them.

I, and you muſt often waſh your hearts, if you would keep them clean, for your hearts will contract filth, do what you can, unleſs they are daily waſht, and duly ſearcht.

As it is with a Garden, let a Garden be dreſt, and made very exact, ſo that there is not any thing amiſs, not a Weed to be ſeen in it: I, but the Garden muſt be kept thus, or elſe in a little time it will be over-run with Weeds again. It is ſo in our hearts: Suppoſe we have weeded out this, and that, and the other evil, if we do not keep a continual care of our hearts, the Weeds will grow again, and therefore our hearts muſt be continually

weeding, and our hearts must be continually washt. We must go daily to the *Fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness*: We must wash our hearts by the renewed Acts of Repentance, confessing our sins, bewailing our sins, mortifying our sins. This is a great work for us. If you have pure hearts, look to it that you keep them pure; you may quickly be defiled: *David*, a man that had a pure heart, yet got so much defilement upon his heart, that he could not tell what to make of it, but begs of God to *create* him a *new heart*, and all because he did not watch his heart, but gave way to Temptation, and so was overtaken: then you will find, if you do not daily sweep your houses, they will defile, and the cob-webs they will grow, the Spiders will be at work, and though your hearts be never so pure, Spiders will creep into them, this Lust,

and

and that Corruption, and they will be weaving their Webs there. O what ſad Webs we have in the hearts of men, and all becauſe they look not after them! You muſt ſweep down the Cob-webs, and throw out the dirt every day, if you would keep your hearts clean.

And I would preſs all I have ſaid, by theſe four Conſiderations. Look to it that you have pure hearts, and that you keep your hearts pure.

Firſt, Upon this Conſideration which you find in Pſal. 18. 26. *with the pure, thou wilt ſhew thy ſelf pure: with the merciful, thou wilt ſhew thy ſelf merciful:* with an upright man thou wilt ſhew thy ſelf upright. *with the pure thou wilt ſhew thy ſelf pure.* I, but if a man be not pure, Will God ſhew himſelf impure towards him? No ſuch thing. Let us be what we will, God is ever the ſame. Nothing

thing can turn him out of his purity. But the meaning is, If we are pure, pure in heart, God will ſhew himſelf pure to us: that is, he will perform all things; he will be that to us which he hath promiſed. He will be all that to us which we can deſire. *With the pure, thou wilt ſhew thy ſelf pure.* And he ſaith, *with the froward, thou wilt ſhew thy ſelf froward.* As God knows how to deal with men in wayes of evil, to hit them according to what they are: With the froward thou wilt ſhew thy ſelf froward. Not that there is any frowardneſs or paſſion in the Lord; but men ſhall be dealt with according to their way. They that will *wreſtle* with God, as the word there ſignifies, he will pay them in their own coin: And ſo with the pure, thou wilt ſhew thy ſelf pure. And then,

Secondly, Look to this purity,

for then all things are pure to you. As God will ſhew himſelf pure to you: So if you are pure, all things will be pure to you, Titus 1. 15. *Unto the pure, all things are pure; but unto them that are defiled, and unbelieving, is nothing pure.* Here is a very ſtrong Argument to preſs you to this purity of heart: *To the pure, all things are pure.* To the impure, nothing is pure. Why is it that to the pure all things are pure? What are evil actions pure to them? Is ſin pure to them? No: God forbid that any ſhould have ſuch a thought. This liberty have ſome taken to themſelves, as if there were no difference to be made in actions: But, to the pure, all things are pure. They need not trouble themſelves about ſin, or this or that. No, but *to the pure all things are pure:* that is, all things are bleſſed to them: All their enjoyments, all the Ordinances

of

of God, all their outward comforts, all their relations, all their duties, all things are pure to them. Whereas, ſaith he, *To them that are defiled, there is nothing pure.* The very holy *Ordinances* are not pure to them: Their *Callings*, though honeſt, are not pure to them: their riches, their great poſſeſſions in the world, are not pure to them: They have not a pure, nor a holy uſe of any of theſe things. This is an awakening conſideration, to look after a pure heart, *To the pure, all things are pure; but to the undefiled there is nothing pure; but even their mind and conſcience is defiled.* And then,

Thirdly, The pure in heart, are only fit for Communion with God, 2 *Tim.* 2. 22. ſaith he, *With them that call on the Lord, out of a pure heart.* They only are fit to call upon God, who have a pure heart. The Apoſtle would have them lift

up *clean hands*, in 1 *Tim.* 2. 8. (much more then, pure hearts, who call upon God *out of a pure heart.*) And when the Apoſtle *James* had exhorted them to draw nigh to God, with this Promiſe of Aſſurance, that he would draw nigh to them, preſently he adds, *Cleanſe your hands ye ſinners, and purifie your hearts ye double minded.* You are no wayes fit for Communion with God, for drawing near to God, unleſs your hearts are thus purified, thus purged, thus cleanſed. And then,

Fourthly, Laſtly, The pure in heart are thoſe that have that great promiſe, the promiſe which concludes all good; namely, *To ſee God.* Matth. 5. 8. *Bleſſed are the pure in heart.* Why? Saith he, *They ſhall ſee God.* God is a Spirit, God is Inviſible, How ſhall they ſee him? Him no man hath ſeen, nor can ſee. How ſhall the

pure

pure in heart ſee him? Why, they ſhall ſee him; that is, they ſhall enjoy him, they ſhall have ſweet communion with him; they ſhall aſcend into the Holy Hill, *Pſal.* 24. 3, 4. *who ſhall aſcend into the Holy Hill? He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart.* They ſhall be admitted nigh to God, they ſhall ſee him, they ſhall enjoy him.

I may conclude with that of the Prophet, *Hab.* 1. 13. he ſaith, that *God is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity.* And the truth is, Impure eyes cannot behold God: They cannot bear the Glory, the Excellency of his preſence: They cannot enjoy God. There is a ſtop in the very nature of the thing, as well as there is a ſtop by a Divine Law. Thus the Impoſture ſhall not come into the preſence of God; that's the Divine Law. And there is a ſtop in the very nature of the

thing: they cannot abide in the preſence of God. As he is of purer eyes, than to behold evil: ſo evil ones have ſuch impure eyes, that they cannot behold him, they cannot ſee God.

Now then, let this be conſidered, and lay it to heart, what reaſon you have to look after this *pure heart*, which is the firſt of thoſe three ſprings, out of which ſaith the Apoſtle, all thoſe holy actions, which are the end, and the fulfilling of the Commandment of God muſt flow, and with which only it is that you may come to have acceptance. And ſo much now of the firſt of the Springs, The Pure Heart. The ſecond is, a Good Conſcience.

FINIS.

PSAL. 92. 12.

The righteous ſhall flouriſh like the Palm-tree. He ſhall grow like a Cedar in Lebanon.

WE ſee commonly that oppoſites, either perſons or things, being laid together, illuſtrate and ſet off one another. (To touch at no other things in this Pſalm) Here are two of the greateſt oppoſites in this world laid together, and they do wonderfully illuſtrate each other.

The oppoſites are, the *wicked* and the *Righteous*. And indeed, thoſe two divide the whole world.

The ſtate of the wicked, is ſet down at the ſeventh Verſe, *They may ſpring as the Graſs, they may flouriſh.* But what's the iſſue of it? *It is that they ſhall be deſtroyed for ever.* They ſhall *ſpring*, but they ſhall ſpring but *like Graſs*, which is Green for a while, and quickly withers.

Now the *Righteous* at this twelfth Verſe, (For I ſhall not enlarge further upon the ſtate of the wicked; but only to ſet off the ſtate of the Righteous.) The Righteous ſhall flouriſh too. But how? Not like the *Graſs*, but like the *Palm-tree.* And indeed, they ſhall *abide for ever*: whereas the wicked, they ſhall be *deſtroyed for ever.*

Who the *Righteous* are, I ſhall not ſtay to ſpeak of at large.

They are ſuch as are righteous in their ſtate, being in the righteouſneſs of Jeſus Chriſt.

And they are ſuch as are righteous in their courſe, and in their life,

life, walking answerably to such a state.

These *Righteous* ones shall *flourish*. They shall not only *Live* and *Continue*, but they shall have a flourishing life. *David* saith, Mine enemies *live*, and are *mighty*. 'Tis true, they do so for a time, many times. The Righteous live, and they have a mightiness too. *For they flourish.*

And how do they flourish? Not as the Grass, but as the *Palm-tree.*

I shall only open that a little, and touch only upon one point, from the Paralel. *They shall flourish as the Palm-tree.*

The Palm-tree is an excellent tree, and the praises of God are often resembled by it: Nay, they are said in the *Revelation* to have Palms in their hands. And they are shadowed by the Palm-tree, in the Prophecy of *Ezekiel*, *Chap.* 40. 31. in the description of the *New Jerusalem.*

Now when it is said, They shall

flouriſh like a Palm-tree: We muſt conſider how the Palm-tree flouriſhes.

The Palm tree, (only to touch that) is the *Date-tree*, that's the Palm-tree. And ſo the Meeter, or Singing Pſalms expreſſes it. There it is rendred thus,

The Juſt ſhall flouriſh up on high,
As Date-trees bud and blow.

Now there are five things which are obſerved in the Date-tree, I ſhall name them all, but ſpeak only a little to one to carry on this point of the flouriſhing of the Righteous like the Palm-tree.

Firſt, The Date, or the Palm-tree grows in the pureſt ſoil: it will not grow in filthy places, in dungy places, but it loves a very pure ſoil. And thus the Righteous flouriſh: They flouriſh in a very pure ſoil: for they are planted in that which is the pureſt ſoil of all: They are planted in Chriſt:

Chriſt: They grow in Chriſt; and they grow in the Church, which is a pure ſoil. They are planted in the houſe of God, as it follows in the *Pſalm.* Not in the world, the unclean and polluted world, which lyes in wickedneſs, and ſmells like a dunghill, but in the Garden of God. And,

Secondly, The Palm-tree is a Tree whoſe branches do ſhoot all upwards: there's none grow out of the ſide, as other Trees have. And thus the Righteous flouriſh as the Palm-tree: their affections are ſet upon things above: they grow up Heaven-ward. They do not ſhoot out their branches this way, or that way to the world, but all to Heaven. So it is while they act according to their ſtate.

Thirdly, The Palm-trees are thoſe Trees which are alwayes green: Green in Winter as well as in Summer. It doth not caſt its leaf, nor fade; as the expreſſion is in *Pſal.*

1. 3. The godly man is like a Tree planted by the Rivers of Water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season, *His leaf also shall not wither.* They hold up their profession: they are green, not only in the Summer of prosperity, but in the very Winter of adversity; and maintain their verdure, and their beauty in the hardest times.

Fourthly, The Palm-tree is a Tree that doth not only keep its greenness, the beauty of its *leaves*; but it is a Tree that is full of fruit; and that *good fruit*, pleasant fruit, sweet fruit, a kind of Cordial fruit, which you know the Date is. The Righteous have the greenness of a profession: and besides that, they have the fruitfulness of their Conversation; and 'tis pleasant fruit, fruits of Righteousness, fruits of Faith, fruits of Love, the fruits of the Spirit. They are fruitful Trees, such a one as the Palm.

Fifthly, (Which I shall a little insist

inſiſt upon.) They flouriſh like the Palm-tree. It is ſo far noted, that it is made an Emblem. The Palm-tree doth grow up, when it is moſt preſt down. When there are the heavieſt weights hung upon the Palm-tree, then the Palm-tree riſes up higheſt. It grows higheſt, when it is (as it were) kept down. Thus it is with the Righteous; they flouriſh like the Palm-tree: And that's the Note that I ſhall give you, and ſpeak a little to.

DOCT.

That Righteous perſons, ſuch as are righteous in their ſtate, in a juſtified ſtate; and Righteous in their courſe, walking in holineſs, they do improve and grow under greateſt preſſures. When they meet with the greateſt preſſures in the world, they thrive and grow Heaven-ward.

This only I ſhall ſpeak a little to. When the world would cruſh the Righteous, preſs them down to the earth, yea, preſs them down to *Hell* if they could, yet like the Palm-tree, they grow up more and more.

It is ſaid of the people of *Iſrael*, who were the Church of God in *Exod.* 1. that when *Pharaoh* put weights upon them, the weights of very heavy oppreſſion; when he ſet over them Task-maſters to afflict them with their burthens at *ver.* 11. it is ſaid ver. 12. *But the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplyed and grew.* This was juſt like the Palm-tree. *Pharaoh* burthened them, but they multiplyed and grew. And ſurely we are to underſtand this, not only of their multiplyplying in *number*, but of their multiplying in *goodneſs* too, or their increaſe in goodneſs: they multiplyed and grew (Doubtleſs there is that ſenſe in it) not only that they had a greater company, and more fruitful

ful as to the production of perſo ns, but that they were more fruitful in their lives. And that's it which hath been ſaid of the Church at all times, when under preſſures and burthens. Saith One, They were bound, they were beaten, they were burnt, and yet they multiplyed and increaſed. And doubtleſs, it was with the two-fold increaſe I ſpake of before. The more perſons were added to the Church; and thoſe perſons that were added, advanced more in wayes of Grace, in wayes of Holineſs. And ſo that other ſaying of the Antients upon this very point; *That the blood of the Martyrs was the ſeed of the Church.* It was like ſeed indeed, and it brought forth, as the ſeed ſpoken of in *Matth.* 13. The good ſeed falling upon good ground, brought forth, in ſome thirty, in ſome ſixty, in ſome an hundred fold. This is flouriſhing like the Palm-tree. And that we find in Dan. 11. 35. *And ſome of them of under-*

understanding shall fall. Shall fall! How? Shall fall into the hand, and under the hands of persecuting Tyrants; they shall fall into trouble; like that in the *Proverbs, The Righteous falleth seven times a day.* That is, he falls often into trouble, yet God helps them up again. Now saith he, some of them of *understanding*; that is, of a spiritual understanding, of a holy understanding: they shall fall into afflictions: for them of understanding, we may explain it by Dan. 12. 10. *None of the wicked shall understand, but the wise shall understand.* The godly wise, they shall understand. Now of these men of understanding: Many shall fall: Well, what shall be the effect of it? *To try them.* That's the First.

And not only so, but to purge, and to make them white. To purge out their corruptions, and to make their Graces very conspicuous. You see the improvement they made of their af-

ſlictions and ſufferings for the truths of God: and that in Zach. 13. 9. teaches the ſame thing. *I will bring the third part through the fire*: through the fire of perſecution. And what, ſhall they be burnt there? No, ſaith he, *I will refine them as Silver is refined, and will try them as Gold is tryed: and they ſhall call on my Name, and I will hear them, I will ſay, it is my people; and they ſhall ſay, The Lord is my God.* Thus they ſhall grow up in the actings of their faith to an aſſurance. Faith ſhall come to an appropriating act; they ſhall ſay, *The Lord is my God.* And when? Even when I bring them through the fire. I will refine them ſo, that their faith ſhall be exceeding tranſparent: and they ſhall ſay, *The Lord is my God.* And we know what the Apoſtle *Paul* found by the ſufferings which befell him; and in him the Church of God, Phil. 1. 12. ſaith he, *I would you ſhould underſtand, Brethren, that the thing*

which

which happened unto me----Why, what things were theſe that hapned to *Paul?* What was it ſome great preferment, (as we ſay) ſome great Benefice, ſome great honour? No, the things that befell him, were troubles and afflictions; *Bonds*, as he doth expreſs it in *ver.* 13. Now ſaith he, Theſe have *fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the Goſpel.* How, to the furtherance of the Goſpel? Why, becauſe perſons by this affliction upon me, which threatned them alſo; and 'tis like took hold of ſome of them: why, ſaith he, *They waxed confident by my bonds, and are much more bold to ſpeak the word without fear*, ver. 14. They grew up like the Palm tree; they grew to a confidence. They were not only *honeſt* and *faithful*, but they were *confident* and *bold.* They had not only integrity for Chriſt, but a great increaſe of ſtrength for Chriſt; and all upon his ſufferings: They flouriſh like the Palm-tree.

And

And that in *Rom.* 5. will reach it too: ſaith he, *We glory in tribulation, knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope.* Why, tribulation did not hinder their Graces, but did further them. Tribulation did work patience. It ſeems to be a very ſtrange ſting. Tribulation doth exerciſe patience indeed: But how? It did work patience, or make them more patient: for that's the meaning of it. Now it ſeems very ſtrange, yet thus it doth. And then Patience experience, and experience hope. Here's a flouriſhing, and a growing up in all Graces, even in a time of tribulation. And it's the ſame thing that we have too in 2 Cor. 4. 17. *Our light affliction which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.* That is, it works us into a greater fitneſs for glory, the afflictions that are upon us. We grow more up into Heaven, more

more into glory. Our hope doth (as it were) rise up into glory by our affliction: And this is flourishing like the Palm-tree. Affliction will make us the fitter for Heaven: they will make us better than we were, and so fitter for Heaven, fitter for glory. Grace improved is very near to glory. Thus we see how the Scripture holds out this thing, that the righteous flourish as the Palm-tree. They are bettered, and made fitter by their afflictions for glory.

I will give you an account in some grounds of it, why it is so, how it comes to pass.

First, The pressures and weights that are upon the Righteous from the world, do wean them from the world, takes them off from the world. Why now the love of the world, and cleaving to the world, and desires going after the world, are a mighty impediment to our growth in grace, to our *flourishing* in the world. You see what's said in *Matth.* 13. the cares

cares of the world, the pleasures of the world, the deceitfulness of riches, choke the Word, and make it become altogether unfruitful. And truly the love of the world, and pursuit of worldly things, do exceedingly hinder grace in the fourth Ground, in those that are truly godly, it is a great hindrance to them till they get their hearts mortified to the world, and weaned from the world. Now certainly the pressures that we meet withal in the world, are an exceeding great means to take us off from the pleasures of the world, and the profits of the world. We are mortified to the world: as *Paul* saith of the Cross of Christ, Gal. 6. 14. *God forbid that I should glory in any thing save in the Cross of Christ.* What's the Cross of Christ? Why, the sufferings which I have for Christ, the weights which are laid upon me for Christs sake. What was the effect of this? Why, *whereby I am crucified unto the world, and the world unto*

to me. Now when the ſoul is delivered from this world, this evil world, it muſt needs flouriſh up to the other world.

Secondly, By the afflictions and troubles we meet with in this world, we get much light, and grow into a clearer knowledge of thoſe things which makes for our increaſes Heaven-ward. It hath been antiently ſaid, That affliction gives underſtanding; and the School of the Croſs, is the School of light. Light comes in while we are in the School of the Croſs. And indeed there is a fourfold light doth come in to us while we are under the Croſs, and under ſufferings. A light,

Firſt, Which diſcovers more to us the vanity of the world, than ever we ſaw before, and the baſeneſs of the world, and the wickedneſs of the world: and this is a great advantage to us. And,

Secondly, A light to ſee more of of the Mind of God, and of the Word

Word of God. So *David* in *Psal.* 119. 71. *It was good for me that I have been afflicted, for thereby I have learned thy Statutes.* Saith he, learned them? I have more of thy Statutes, and I have learned every Statute more. There hath come in a clearer light into my ſoul now by my afflictions. A ſtate of affliction is in it ſelf called in Scripture, *A ſtate of Darkneſs*: it is a time of darkneſs: and yet it is wonderful, that out of this Darkneſs there comes a light; a ſpiritual light: ſo that we ſee more of the Word of God, and of the wonderful things of the Law.

Thirdly, It muſt needs follow, that by affliction we have a clearer light to ſee the worth of grace, and of an intereſt in Jeſus Chriſt, what an excellent thing that is. And then,

Fourthly, A clearer light to ſee the excellency of Jeſus Chriſt himſelf. As of an *Intereſt* in Chriſt, ſo of the *perſon* of Chriſt, how glori-

ous, how choice a one Jesus Christ is. I do but touch this now: By affliction a light comes into the soul: Upon all these, or upon other accounts, we must needs improve Heaven-ward, and grow up like the Palm-tree. In 2 *Pet.* 3. 18. saith the Apostle, *Grow in Grace.* Why how should we come to grow in grace? Why, saith he, *And in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.* In proportion to our growth in the knowledge, in the true knowledge, I speak not of a notional knowledge, a meer brain knowledge, but of an experimental knowledge of Jesus Christ. As we increase in this knowledge, so we increase and grow in grace: and so of the rest. As we grow in the knowledge of the vanity of the world: as we grow in the knowledge of the Word of God, as we grow in the knowledge of the worth of grace, and of an interest in Christ, as we grow in the knowledge of the excellency of the knowledge of

the Person of Christ, so we must needs grow in grace. Now then, the Cross and affliction giving us an advantage for all these things, you see the ground of it. And then,

Thirdly, The weights and pressures which are upon these Palm-trees, upon the Righteous, they do draw them more into their own hearts, to converse more at home, to search themselves more, to be acquainted more with their own bosomes, and this will make us flourish, and grow upwards: for indeed the reason why we grow up so little in acquaintance with Christ, lyes much in this, because we grow so little in acquaintance with our selves. Now in an afflicted condition (if ever) the soul is upon its return to it self. In *Lam.* 3. when the whole Church was in that sad condition, under those grievous weights of Captivity, and all manner of trouble they were in: say they, *Let us search and try our selves.* Come, now let's go in to

our ſelves; let us ſearch for our corruptions; ſearch for our luſts, which lye in the ſecret corners of our hearts; let us ſearch our ſelves, and let us ſearch how it is with us as to Grace; what faith we have, what love we have, what patience, and ſo of the reſt. Indeed, afflictions do put us upon this ſearch of our ſelves, to find out the ſtate of our graces; how it is with us, what condition they are in, how they fare. Now this the troubles we meet with in the world, give us an advantage for, and ſo an advantage of ſpiritual growth, of growing Heaven-ward, as the Palm-tree. And then,

Fourthly, Theſe afflictions and preſſures we have from the world, drive us nearer to God. As to a more acquaintance with our ſelves, ſo to a more acquaintance with God, and more communion with Chriſt. They do (as it were) force us to Chriſt, when the world deals ſo unkindly with us. Many times when

the world is kind to us, fair with us, and flatters us, and huggs us, and embraces us, we begin to forget, and to ſlight communion with Jeſus Chriſt; and to ſay as they in Jer. 2. *We are Lords, we will come no more at thee.* It is ſpoken of the people of *Iſrael*, when they were in a very flouriſhing condition. I, but when they were ſlaves, and in captivity, and in a ſad condition, truly then they ſaw reaſon to come to Chriſt, to come to him by prayer. The very Mariners in *Jonah*, when they were in the ſtorm, every one went to his God. Iſa. 26. *In their trouble they have viſited me.* To be ſure I ſhall hear of them then, *In their affliction they will ſeek me early.* It is ſo in evil men, much more is it ſo in the righteous, and in thoſe that have walkt with God. If they have had a conſtant communion with God and Jeſus Chriſt in a time of peace and proſperity, ſurely in a time of preſſures they have

much more communion with him. Now this must needs cause the soul to increase and flourish. For the nearer we are to God, the more we have of God, and receive impressions from him; as *Moses*, when he was with God in the Mount, his face did shine. But in times of outward peace, and when all is well, O we are very ready to neglect communion with God.

Fifthly, Lastly, While the righteous are under weights and pressures, like a Palm-tree, they have a special promise of the presence of God with them; and this is that which makes them flourish indeed. It is not our being in affliction, which will make us better, and make us grow Heaven-ward; but it is Christ being with us in affliction. It is Gods manifesting himself to us in affliction which makes us grow, and flourish like a Palm-tree. Now I need not stay to tell you how many promises there are of the special presence of God

God to his people while they are under the Crosse, that in Isa. 43. 2. *when thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the Rivers, they shall not overflow thee; when thou walkest through the fire thou shalt not be burnt, neither shall the flame kindle upon thee.* I will be with thee. And truly the presence of God with us, is not only for this end (Though that be there expresse) that we shall not be quite swallowed up, that the water shall not drown us, nor the fire consume us; but that the fire and water shall not consume us as to our soul state. That we shall not suffer loss or detriment in our spiritual state, by being in the fire or water; but that we shall increase there, and grow there. So in 1 Pet. 4. 14. *If ye be reproached for the Name of Christ, happy are ye: for the Spirit of Glory and of God resteth on you.* It doth mightily come to you, and *wish* you, but it *rests* upon you. Now when the

Spirit of God is, especially when the Spirit of God *rests*, and doth abide, there must needs be a growth, and an increase in our spiritual state. But so it is, while we are under these afflicting dispensations, when the weights are upon us, we have promises of more of the presence of God, and of the presence of his Spirit, and of the resting of his Spirit; and therefore we shall flourish, flourish spiritually, flourish in our inner man. That may serve for the clearing of the Point, That the *Righteous flourish as the Palm-tree, under weights and pressures.*

Application. First, This may confirm us in a twofold Scripture-truth.

First, That there is no wisdom, nor counsel against the Lord. That's a Scripture assertion, which receives a mighty confirmation by this point. *Prov.* 21. 30. This point doth mightily confirm it. Why, what's the Counsel, what's the purpose of the world, when they hang their weights upon the Palm-trees, upon the righteous,

ous, what's the meaning? You ſhall underſtand their meaning: when the firſt weights that we read of in the Scripture were ever hung upon theſe Palm-trees, in the place before quoted, Exod. 1, 10. *Come on*, ſaith he, *Let us deal wiſely with them.* The Wiſe man ſaith in the *Proverbs*, *There is no wiſdom, nor counſel againſt the Lord.* Well, ſaith he here, *Let us deal wiſely with them.* To what purpoſe? Why, ſaith he, *Leſt they multiply.* We will keep them down; keep them down, that their perſons multiply not; and we will keep them down too, that their Graces multiply not. Truly this is the deſign of the Counſels of men, in hanging their weights upon the Palm-trees; and ſo it hath been all along in the ſufferings of the Church. What hath been their wiſdoms? They thought by their ſufferings to keep down thoſe truths which they profeſt, which it may be they call'd *Hereſie*: As *Paul* ſaith, *After the*

way which you call Hereſie; ſo worſhip I the God of my Fathers. Hereſies, they thought to ſuppreſs them as Errors and Hereſies.

And they thought again to diſcourage the profeſſors: yea, they thought not only to diſcourage them in matters of truth, of faith and worſhip; but they thought to turn them quite aſide; to make them renounce it, to forſake it, to apoſtatize, to backſlide, to deny the faith. This is the thing which they have had in their eye, in all the preſſures which they have laid upon the people of God from one time to another, to ſtrip them of their faith, and to ſtrip them of the truth; to break them in the things of God. Now I ſay, this is their Counſel. And mark what the Scripture ſaith, *There is no wiſdom, nor counſel againſt the Lord.* They thought to hinder them in all theſe things, to ſuppreſs the truth, to diſcourage the profeſſors of the truth, and to cauſe them to turn

away,

away, and to deny the truth. But they have fail'd in it: for they multiplyed, and the truth multiplyed; and they flouriſht more by the weights and burdens that were upon their backs. So that we may ſay in this caſe, as the Prophet *Iſaiah*, Chap. 44. 25. *That the Lord turns the Counſels of the wicked backward.* Turneth wiſe men backward: that is, their wiſdom which they have been exerciſing, that hath produced a quite contrary effect to what they intended: they thought to hinder the truth; and they have been rather a furtherance to it, as *Pauls* word is in the firſt of the *Philippians*. Theſe things have hapned to the furtherance of the Goſpel, which they thought ſhould have ruined the Goſpel. And this indeed is ſo notorious, that the enemies of the Goſpel have been forced many times to acknowledge, and to confeſs it with grief, That the righteous have flouriſht like Palm-trees. In *Exod.* 1. 12. when it

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is ſaid, the *more they afflicted them, the more they multiplyed and grew.* And what follows? *And they,* that is, the *Ægyptians, were grieved becauſe of the children of Iſrael.* We ſee we cannot bring them down: their Counſels went quite backward. And you have the like in *John* 12.19. The Phariſees when they had done all that they could to hinder the peoples receiving of Jeſus Chriſt, they ſaid among themſelves, *Perceive ye how ye prevail nothing? Behold, the world is gone after him.* You ſee they were fain to make an acknowledgement of this thing their own ſelves. We have been labouring to ſtop the progreſs of this man, but we find it quite otherwiſe; we prevail nothing at all. Not only, not *much,* but *nothing. And behold, the world is gone after him.* He will get all the world ſhortly, they multiply ſo faſt. So that we ſee from this, the truth of the Scripture, that there is no Counſel againſt the Lord.

And

And it may give you a further confirmation by way of Inſtruction, concerning that great truth, in Rom. 8. 28. *All things ſhall work together for good to them that ſerve God, and are the called according to his purpoſe. All things work together for good.* What things? Troubles, afflictions, preſſures, burdens which are laid upon them, they work for good. Why, this is one of the greateſt goods that can be, to have grace flouriſh and grow. Faith and Humility, and Love to Jeſus Chriſt, if one increaſe in theſe things. What is worthy the name of *good*, in compariſon of an increaſe of theſe things. That's one thing we may take notice of from it.

Secondly, We ſhould be hence raiſed up in our hearts, to magnifie the power, wiſdom and goodneſs of God, who doth thus over-rule theſe things for his people: for certainly this doth declare the wonderful work of God. In *Iſa.* 28. where he hath a

notable

notable Allegory, and ſpeaks of the troubles and ſufferings of the faithful people of God: For all that that is ſpoken of the *Plowman*, and of the *Threſher*, and of the *bruiſing of the Corn* with threſhing Inſtruments, they do reſpect affliction and troubles which come upon the people of God, (as is clear.) But now, ſaith he, in the cloſe of that Chapter, *This alſo cometh from the Lord of Hoſts, which is wonderful in counſel, and excellent in working.* We may wonder at the counſel and wiſdom of God, who doth his people good by *threſhing them*, and *bringing the wheel over them.* Here are ſeveral ſorts of afflictions and ſufferings, ſome leſſer, and ſome greater. Now all this is but to ſeparate the good ſeed from the chaff, and to make it more fit for uſe: for while the Corn is in the ear, it is not fit for uſe, and we cannot make bread of it untill it be threſht. Now the Lord hath ſeveral wayes to do it. But ſaith he,

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This cometh forth from the Lord of Hosts, which is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working. Truly we may say, How wonderful is the counsel of the Lord! How excellent is his working, that he makes the Righteous to flourish like the Palm-tree; to grow upwards, by that which one would think should bring them down! As when we see the Corn laid at, and thresht with a Flail, one would think there were great hurt intended to the Corn; but it is only to separate it from the chaff, that it may appear in its own beauty and usefulness. So the Lord hath a flail of tribulation, to separate the Chaff from the Wheat. Those acts of Providence towards Gods people, which seem to be for their hurt and undoing; when they are threshe as it were by the world, it is only to make them appear what they are. That which we find in *Psal. 69. 22.* concerning the wicked, by that we may observe the wonder-

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ful difference, and dealings of God with the wicked, who flouriſh as the Graſs, and the righteous. *David* ſpeaks there of ſuch, and ſaith he, *Let their table become a ſnare, and that which ſhould have been for their welfare, let it become a trap*: that is, the Lord doth curſe their Comforts. By *Table*, he means the good things upon their table: when they have a full table, a plentiful table, And ſo all outward proſperity, ſaith he, it ſhall be a *ſnare* to them. *And that which ſhould have been for their good*: that is, that which in the nature of it is for their good, *It ſhall be an occaſion for their falling*: they ſhall grow more hardned by it, more proud by it, and more impenitent by it, and more ſtrangers to God by it. But now when the Lord ſpeaks of a righteous man, here the thing which was appointed for his *ſnare*, as the troubles and perſecutions which lye upon him in the world, ſhall be a table to him; his very

ſnares

ſnares ſhall be a table to his inner man, where his Graces ſhall come and feed, and grow fat, and flouriſh, and increaſe. The things which the men of the world have devi'ed for his falling, they ſhall be to him an occaſion of good. This is wonderful, and we are to Bleſs the Lord for it, when we find ſuch effects of it: when we ſee it ſo in others, or have any experience of it in our ſelves, that our afflictions do not ſnare us, but are a table to our Graces. That's another thing, to give God the glory of it; for it is not in the nature of theſe things to do it. No, things would work quite otherwiſe, but that God is wonderful in his Counſels, and excellent in his workings towards his people: they would rather drive us from God, and deſtroy our graces.

Thirdly, Seeing it is ſo, that righteous ones do flouriſh as the Palm-tree, then when any weights of af-

fliction, either personal or publick, or persecution, or whatsoever are upon any of us, let us mind the purpose of God towards us. Let us not think that he comes to hurt us, but to make us grow and flourish like a Palm-tree. Let us mind this, and joyn with God in this Counsel, in laying such things upon his people: Let us joyn with God, and promote the Counsel of God in our own hearts and lives, and in the hearts and lives of others, that they may be bettered by their sufferings, and be encouraged by their sufferings, to believe more in God, and more for God, than ever they were. God doth not intend us hurt, but good by it, and so we should find it, if we were wise to joyn with him in his Purposes.

Fourthly, And then I would say yet further, This may be matter of Tryal to us. We may take a tryal of our selves, both as to the

the ſtate of our perſons, and as to the ſtate of our graces.

First, As to the ſtate of our perſons. Why, how is it with us under ſufferings? Do we improve by them? Do we grow, do we flouriſh, though we have theſe weights upon us? Why, truly it is an argument and evidence that our ſtate is good: for a bad man is not made the better by the evils that are upon him. I know God may uſe afflictions to change a man, but unſound hearts, they that have been unſound and falſe in the profeſſion of the Goſpel, they do diſcover themſelves in ſuch a time, ſhew their rottenneſs, and their naughtineſs. And it is a very great queſtion, whether they that are not bettered by afflictions, were ever good. Though I would not ſpeak it to lay a trouble upon any. Our betterings ſometimes under afflictions, is not very diſcernable, at leaſt at preſent. But

pray, it may put us much upon a doubt, whether we, or any were ever really good, if we are not bettered by afflictions, and by tryals, and by the troubles that are upon us, and by our fears, and by our dangers.

And likewiſe, we may hence have a great tryal, as to the ſtate of our graces, whether our graces are in good plight, yea, or no. For indeed, if faith be down (and the like) we ſhall make little improvement of all our afflictions and croſſes. If love to Chriſt be down, we ſhall rather be upon the loſing ſide. But now if we find that we are increaſed, and are growing and flouriſhing in ſpirituals, when the weight and preſſure is upon us, it is an argument that our graces are in a good ſtate: and grace is in a good ſtate when it thrives, and thrives by ſuch means, as ſeem rather for the quenching of grace,

and

and the hinderance of grace; and therefore truly we ſhould conſider our ſelves at this day: for certainly the Palm-trees are now with their weights upon them, and many have diſcovered themſelves ſadly as to their perſons, ſtates, and the ſtate of their graces, that they have very little love to, and faith in Jeſus Chriſt, becauſe they have not flouriſht in ſuch a day; but rather have declined, and withdrawn, and been aſhamed of what they have formerly been. And therefore let us remember that which the Apoſtle ſpeaks in *Heb.* 12. ſpeaking of afflictions, which are ſufferings for Chriſt, (that's taken in the Chapter) not only thoſe afflictions, which are fatherly chaſtiſements from the hand of God; but thoſe which are from men, for righteouſneſs ſake. Certainly that is the purpoſe of God; it is all for our profit. Therefore let us conſider, whether we

profit, yea, or no. *We have had Fathers of our flesh which corrected us; and we gave them reverence: Shall we not much rather be in subjection to the Father of Spirits, and live?* Submit to the will of God, if he will lay any tribulation upon us for his Name sake; for he hath done all for our profit. What profit? For the profit of our purses, and estates in this world? No, for a better profit than all that; for our profit, that we might be made partakers of his holiness.

And truly that is another thing, with which I shall conclude. We say this, That we have no reason to be impatient under afflictions and persecutions, under the troubles we meet with in this world for the Name of Christ. Why? for they are for our profit, for our growing; and that we may be made more partakers of the holiness of God: That we may be better

while we live, and fitter to dye, and to glorifie him both living and dying.

And thus I have only toucht theſe things, *That the Righteous do flouriſh like the Palm-tree, with their weights and preſſures upon them.*

FINIS.
